

RELIQUIÆ SACRÆ:
O R,
SACRED DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

A Father and his Children.

By the Reverend
Mr. RICHARD PEARSALL,
Late Minister at *Taunton, Somersetshire.*

Published from his Manuscripts, designed for the Press,
By THOMAS GIBBONS, D. D.



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THE
EDITOR
TO THE
READER.

THE Editor in a Preface to the other Volume of Mr. *Pearshall's Remains*, mentions only the Publication of that Part of them, and gives Notice that the other was designed to follow in a short Time. It has been thought proper to delay the Advertisement of the first Volume till the other was compleated; and accordingly they now make their Appearance together. If the Editor might be permitted to give
his

his Judgment upon them, he should say that they breathe an holy and heavenly Spirit; that they bear a strong Testimony to the lively and fruitful Genius of their Author; and that the last Volume is distinguished with curious and learned Observations, as well as affords a rich Variety of moral and divine Hints and Reflections for the Benefit of the Reader.

It would give a very sensible Pleasure to the Editor if he should find the Publication of these *Remains* of the worthy Author, now removed from our World, crowned with eminent Usefulness; so that, like the Sun descended below the Horizon, Mr. *Pearfall* might hereby irradiate Mankind with a Legacy of Beams and Blessings.



SACRED DIALOGUES

Between a Father and his Children.



The First Dialogue.

FATHER.

AS we have been offering to the Most High our Evening Sacrifice of Prayer and Praise, and been yielding I hope an attentive Ear to his Word, let us now, my dear Charge, indulge to social Converse, on some useful, interesting, and entertaining Topicks; and as we are united in such intimate Bonds of Nature and Affections, let what occurs to our Thoughts be frankly offered and candidly received.

SEVERAL of you, my dear Children, have had an Education above many; not what the World calls the *most* polite, yet such as has been adapted

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to

to open the Mind and bend your Hearts; an Education that has actually given you some Knowledge, and tended to excite a Relish for more. By these Means I have aimed to make a Present of you to the Publick worth its Acceptance, while the Children of too many Families, by their Ignorance and Sloth, and the Wickedness which follows upon both, are Burdens to the Societies to which they belong, meer loathsome Nufances to those around them; and as such are first disregarded, and then rejected: Or else, if in superior Life, they have been educated like *Butterflies*, only to make a shewy Outside, while they neither spin with the *Silk-worm*, nor yield Honey with the *Bee*. But I have aimed to feel a judicious Tendernefs for you, my dear Offspring, who have been the Delight of my Eyes, the Darlings of my Heart; with reference to whom I have often been obliged to check the fond Indulgence which I have found growing upon me while your little Arms have been entwined around me; while your prattling Tongues have poured forth in my Ear the most engaging Innocence, Chearfulness, and Love: Yea, how often when sick have I hung over your Couches? How often mingled my Tears with yours, and sent up my Sighs and Prayer to him who I knew could alone help you. Or in Milton's Words,

Leaning

Leaning half rais'd with Looks of cordial Love
 Hung over you enamour'd, and beheld
 Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep
 Shot forth peculiar Graces.—

WITH respect to each of you, my dear Hopes and Joys, my first and prevailing Care has been to give you a *religious* Education. I considered you not only as continuing in this World for a Time, and acting a Part upon the Stage of Life, (which I was desirous you should act *well*, comfortably to yourselves, and profitably to all) but as chiefly design'd for *Immortality*. I knew that each of you had a *Soul* coeval with *Angels*, a Lamp lighted up within, which must burn when Sun and Stars shall be extinguished. In this View, with what Awe have I sometimes stood and mused over you, while you have been intent upon your puerile Diversions? With what Solemnity have I carried you to the divine Footstool? What Groans from my Breast, what Tears from my Eyes has my deep Solicitude for your eternal Weal extorted, while I have been committing you to the divine Mercy, and presenting you to the better Embraces of that good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, even to those affectionate Arms which formerly inclosed little Children, when he took them up and blest them? And the thought that your impure Natures were

derived from *me*, your froward Dispositions a Taint of *my* Blood, added to that Fervor which paternal Love had before inspired. And now the Success which hath in part attended my Care, the gracious Answers which have been given to my Prayers, the Piety which I have seen in some of you towards God, the Love you have discovered to the *Gospel* and the glorious Author of it, your Pantings after Jesus and his Salvation, the *Constancy* and I hope *Seriousness* of your Devotions, and I must add in Justice to you, your affectionate *Duty* to me, yield me a Pleasure beyond the Gifts of *Royalty*; which Pleasure I hope it will be your Care, as it will be ever the Matter of my Supplication, may never diminish.

ELDEST SON.

SIR, I believe I know so much of the Hearts of every one here, that without consulting them separately, I may venture to thank you in their Name, as well as from myself, for all the tender and faithful Care you have expressed towards us from our Birth. For my own Part, I honour you, Sir, as the Instrument of *my* Being, and am grateful to you as my best earthly Friend, who have been the Protector of my Infancy, and the Guide of my Youth. Your Tenderness hath returned with the *Sun*
every

every Morning, and cherished me more than its Beams. Your Eye, your Hand, your Words have expressed the genuine Paternity of your Heart. Your Authority hath been mingled with Gentleness, and your Instructions have not only been enforced with Reason, but animated by Example. The latter hath been the counterpart of the former. Your Reproofs have been so just that I could never blame them, and have been mixed with so much Affection, that they were Balsam to heal, while on this Account they were more sure to wound; and I remember the Time when, while my Wickedness made the Rod necessary, my Ingratitude in offending such a Father, gave me deeper Anguish than all the Chastisement upon my Body. How did my Heart bleed, while the Word attended the Rod? While by the former you appealed to my Conscience, and Conscience admitted the Reproof, could I be offended? No; I thought you gentle while others might think you severe; and while Prayer attended both, *the Rod and Reproof gave Wisdom*. And in this I believe I have the concurring Attestation of all my Brethren. I am sure growing Years confirm my former Approbation of your paternal Care.

FATHER.

THANKS be to God for such a grateful Eccho to my Conduct, which gives me an Heart-felt Satisfaction. I travelled in Birth to see Christ formed in you, and now I see the Fruit of my Travel. Great is my Joy over you, which I trust shall lie down with me in Death, and rise with me in my Resurrection; when I shall be able to surrender you to him that gave you to me, and redeemed you by his Blood and Spirit, saying, "*Behold here am I, and the Children thou hast given me.*"

BUT, my dear Children, let us now enter upon some Topick of Conversation which may be both *pleasing* and *profitable*; and what shall we take for our Theme?—Is every one silent?—I am thinking that the *Fire* before us may yield us intellectual Instruction, as well as corporeal Refreshment.

MISS MOLLY.

PRAY, Papa, *what is Fire?* I see it, I feel it; many are the strange Effects of it in a way of Comfort and Damage: But what must I call it? Whence does it spring?

FATHER.

INDEED, my dear Girl, you put a Question to me which is not easily answered. I don't wonder

wonder my inquisitive Daughter makes this a Query, when it has puzzled so many Philosophers, and they have varied so much in their Opinions about it. It is an Observation of an ingenious Writer, "*That we can scarce name one Point in all Philosophy of more Importance or less, understood.*" I shan't pretend to enter so far into its Nature, as to give you all the Definitions of the Learned, some of which are contrary to one another. But *they* seem to speak most intelligibly who describe it *a Body very subtle, moveable, and penetrating, the Cause or Instrument of Heat and Light.* Some say, it is the grand Instrument of all the Motion and Action in the Universe; that it is scattered in one Quantity or another every where; that without Fire a Man would harden into a Statue, and the very Air cohere into a firm and rigid Mass. But you should distinguish (if we would speak accurately) between *Fire* and *fiery* (ignited) *Bodies.* In what we call a *large Fire*, it is properly speaking but a small Part that is *pure Fire*; the greater Part is Flame, Smoke, and Fuel, which the Fire preys upon and lodges itself in. The most pure Fire is what is collected in a Burning-glass. Fire is in itself imperceptible, and we discover it only in the Effects which it produces on Bodies subject to it. Some of its Properties are as follow.

It is a *weighty* Body ; for they tell us, that pure *Mercury* inclosed in a Phial in a gentle Heat for a whole Year, is reduced into a *Solid*, and the Weight of it considerably increased ; and they know not whence the Addition of Weight can be but from the Fire mixed with it. And they tell us that *Antimony*, if put into the *Focus* of a Burning-glass, will emit Smoke, and be heavier when weighed ; and if put into a stronger will do the same, and still increase in Weight.

ANOTHER Property which is inseparable to Fire is, that it *expands* every Substance it fixes upon. You, my Daughters, perhaps have observed, that the *Clamps* which you put into your Ironing-boxes, will swell in the Fire *when new*, so that they will scarce enter them ; and when cold, they will come out much easier than they entered. And I have seen in an experimental Course of Philosophy, that when a Bar of Iron has but just felt the Warmth of three Candles put beneath it, it has visibly stretched, as one could see by an Engine formed on purpose to discover the nicest Change ; and when the Lamps were taken away, we could as visibly remark the Iron returning to its old Size. The Rarefaction of all other Fluids, as Wine, Ale, and especially the Air by Fire, is more apparent in innumerable Instances that fall under our daily
 Obser-

Observation. Without this Property, the *Thermometer*, by which we estimate Heat, would be of no Use. It is formed entirely upon this Principle; and they assure us, that *Mercury* will by Fire so rarefy, as to ascend thirty Times above its own Height.

ANOTHER Property of Fire is, that it easily moves and puts into *Motion* all the Parts on which it acts, according to the Power that it suffers from them. If *Oil* or *animal Fat* is congealed into a Body, bring it to the Fire and it soon becomes *fluid*. Next to these we may mention Water, Wine, Spirits of Wine, and all Animal Juices; for how often in extreme cold Seasons, or, in other Words, when the Fire hath been most absent, have the Limbs themselves grown rigid or stiff, and almost Motionless? The Parts farthest off from the Heart's Motion feel the Impression first, and the Consequence is, they *mortify* more or less; if the Cold continues longer, Life itself is in Danger by the Contents of the larger Vessels being congealed. In a Word, as I hinted before, all Nature, without a Degree of intermingled Fire, would grow into one solid Body; its Particles would unite as close as Gold itself, would become hard as the impenetrable Diamond. Bring Fire to what is thus united, the Parts relax to their former Degree,

so

so as to answer the End which the great Former designed, and for the Sake of which he ordered that such a Proportion of Fire should be mixed with other Materials. You see then, my Children, that Things are far from being ordered by blind Chance; nay, that Proportions are ordered as by Weight and Measure, according to the Rules laid down by unerring Wisdom. Let us be led by this Consideration to adore, admire, and fear before him, who in the Support and Government of the World, keeps this raging Element in a *Bridle of Restraint*, so that though every where scattered, it does not exert its consuming Faculty, and yet so readily offers itself to the Service of every one that wants it.

ELDEST SON.

PRAY, Sir, what do Philosophers think in respect to the Quantity of Fire in the Universe or our System? Did the great Creator make only so much Fire, never to be increased or lessened? Or does the Multiplication of our Fires, whether in the burning of Towns, or the hottest Glass-houses, and other Houses of chymical Operations, produce an Addition to the original Stock?

FATHER.

MOST of our modern Philosophers imagine, that the *Generation* of Fire is no more than *collecting*

lecting a Part of what the Almighty hath created and diffused through his Works; so that when a Fire is made, and when you see, on the Application of combustible Matter, a Flame arise and spread and turn the Wood or Coal into fiery Bodies, all this is but gathering from the Neighbourhood of the Air more of that pure elementary Fire which was scattered more equally, and so was more undiscernible before. When therefore we say, that one Thing is more combustible than another, the Meaning is, that upon the Application of a Spark of Fire, one Thing hath a Power of attracting more than another. And if this is the Case, then the larger this Fire is before us, the less there must be in some other Place. If a Winter then is peculiarly warm on one Side the Globe, the other Side of the Hemisphere is remarkably cold. You have heard of the long and excessive Frost in the Winter of 1740, and what terrible Effects it produced; now it was observed, that in *New-England* that Winter was uncommonly mild.

MISS MOLLY.

I HAVE often stood by with silent Wonder, when I have seen the Servant strike Fire, and could not forbear enquiring in my own Mind whence those Sparks came? If I handled either of those hard Bodies, I could perceive no Signs of
Fire

Fire in either; and yet my Senses tell me, the one fetches Fire out of the other. I know not to which we are most obliged, or how this Event takes place. Brother *Thomas*, not to trouble *Papa* with this Question I turn to you. You have formerly taught me a little Philosophy, and I believe you would have taught me more, had my Attention encouraged you to be communicative. Time was when I thought such Questions as needless as other young ones of my Sex; I foolishly said, what Good will it do me to know the Nature and Reasons of Things? If I have the Benefit of the Fire to boil my Tea-Kettle, what care I how it is produced. But now my Thoughts take another Turn. I find Knowledge is good for its own Sake; it is the Food of the Mind, the perceptive Faculty of the Soul; and I have found that the more I have enquired into the Works of God, the more Wonders have opened upon my View, Things which I never dreamt of, and the Discovery hath made me serious: And where Folly had blundered, and Inattention stumbled before, I have seen the Footsteps of a Deity, and learned to adore. Had I learned *Latin* as you did, I should have read more; but I am discouraged, as I meet with so many difficult Words. I suppose the Gentlemen found them most expressive of their Meaning; and if so, I must be satisfied; but

but if I thought they did now, as I have heard the Monkish Writers formerly did, wrap up their Learning in a Veil of hard Words, that they might keep Knowledge closely confined, I should be very angry with them.—But whither is my Tongue running? Excuse it, you know it is *Female*.—You remember, Brother, the Question.

MR. THOMAS.

I AM glad, my dear Sister, to find you inquisitive into Things, the Knowledge of which may afford rational Entertainment to the Mind, and by Means of which you may have more venerable Thoughts of the Most High. But as to answering your Question, should I be silent, this might look like Disrespect to one whom I cordially esteem; yet should I attempt to speak, I might blush to do it in the paternal Presence; or should a Father's Indulgence overlook my Weakness, perhaps in the Breast of some here there is a Tribunal, at which Judgment might be given against me.—But I see good Nature in every Countenance, and therefore proceed.

THERE are various Ways by which Fire is produced, or by which it is attracted from the Atmosphere around. *Attrition* is one. We mean by *Attrition* a Rubbing or Agitation of one Thing

Thing against another. Now if these are hard Bodies, as *Flint* and *Steel*, if the Attrition be very brisk and frequently repeated; if also there is a Roughness in the Superficies, so that the Points of Contact are very many, though very small, Warmth, Heat, and actual Sparks are produced. If a Knife is whetted on any Stone, it grows warm soon, which is a Degree of Fire attracted; but if whetted on a rough Stone, by a hard Hand and a quick Motion, it shall more forcibly collect Fire from its Neighbourhood; your Eyes see it, your Hand feels it *. There are

* This Attraction of Fire may lead us to the following pious Reflections. The divine Goodness is richly diffused through Creation and in the Kingdom of Grace. *Love* is spread like Light and Fire abroad. Yet Love divine, whilst only thus generally diffused, is not saving; but the Spirit working upon the Soul, changes it into a Nature fit to receive the Action of this divine Fire, that its Rays might collect themselves upon the once frozen Powers within. Every Grace infused is spiritually, as Philosophers speak, an electric *per se*, which gathers not elementary but divine Fire to itself to emit an heavenly Flame, and burn up every Thing in the Heart which it cannot turn into Fuel to feed itself. ' Lord, says the holy ' Soul, thou hast poured out Love from thyself! ' why should this Fire be only around me, or diffused in Proportions not strong enough to warm so ' cold

are also other Ways of producing Fire, as by mingling of Filings of Steel with Powder of Sulphur, and making them into Paste with Water, and putting them into a close Place. And if I remember right, Mr. *Boyle* produced Fire by putting Ice into strong Oil of Vitriol. But should my Sister ask me, how this Attrition of hard Bodies contributes to alter the Direction of the Particles of Fire, and center them so as to make the Effects so sensible and violent, I must own it is not easy to account for. This seems to be beyond the Reach of human Understanding.

MISS MOLLY.

You, Sir, who have with Smiles hearkened to my childish Prattle, when much younger, will, I doubt not, excuse me, if I propose this Query,

‘ cold a Heart as mine ? Oh ! let it be collected upon me ; not a Spark, but a vehement Flame, a Fire of God : Yea, rouse thee my Faith, awake my Love to collect this Fire in the Use of Means, in which I would rub and chafe these frigid Thoughts and Affections in God’s Presence.— Give me, great Parent of Love, much of this Fire. —Let thy Love transform me into its divine Likeness.—Let me feel its Warmth, and move with its Motions.—Oh ! kindle heavenly Love upon me ! nor need any Fellow-Spirit have the less for my having much ; I shall rob none, whilst thyself the undecaying Fountain of Love supplies us all.’

Whether it be warmer a good way under Ground, than near the Surface? You know I could never make the Trial, but I have heard it is. Pray, tell me, Sir, whether it is so or not; and if it is, what is the Cause?

FATHER.

I BELIEVE the Thing to be real; for tho' I have never made the Experiment any more than you, my Dear, yet Persons of Veracity assure us, that after they have dug under the superficies of the Globe, which may be supposed to have imbibed the Solar Rays, it grows colder; so that in hot Countries they keep Ice all the Year round, with which to cool their Wine. But that when they come 40 or 50 Feet downward, it sensibly grows warmer, so that their Ice will not keep its solid Form; and that at a greater Depth it will grow so warm as to take away Respiration, and Persons cannot breathe, neither will Candles live. But whence this Heat should arise, is a Difficulty that can't easily be resolved. Learned Men, as they can't account for it any other way, imagine that there is a subterraneous Fire, or, as some have not scrupled to call it, a *Sun in the Center of the Globe*. We can only say, "Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty!" How such a Fire can burn, so intimately closed up, we can't imagine; or what

Fewel

Fewel it is that feeds it, we are at a Loss to know; or how it is that it is so temper'd as to be kept burning, and yet restrained from destroying all around it. There are, my dear Children, a thousand Things in Philosophy, or the Study of the Works of God, which are to us too hard to be resolved. And perhaps it may be so ordered to check the Pride of Man. Knowledge is apt to puff up, and the vain Mind of Man is ready upon knowing a little, to imagine it shall soon know all. But Man quickly falls into Labyrinths which he knows not how to unravel. He must take one Side of the Question, and yet Difficulties so great stare him in the Face, that he is ready to call them Absurdities. Many Times Facts are so evident, that he can't possibly deny them, and yet every Method of accounting for them is so hedg'd up with Thorns, that he sits down astonished, and owns himself nonplust. His *Hypothesis* are no better than what Mr. *Pope* hath represented them, *viz.* the spreading abroad a *Spider's Web*, or an old Philosopher blowing up fine shewy *Bubbles* from *Soapy Water*, and admiring them till they burst and disappear. And yet Philosophy, kept in its proper Place, is a noble Study; and the Works of God teach us many divine Lessons. But when in Reason's Ear Philosophy is heard to say, "*Hitherto can I go, but no farther,*" the Word of

the Lord beams out with kind directive Rays, and leads us farther, even into the deep Things of God. Yet as it was never the Design of Revelation to satisfy our Curiosity, but to humble and purify us, and to lead us to the Mediator, to his Atonement and Spirit of Grace, to Heaven and the first Fruits of it, we must ever remember to use it to the Purposes for which it was designed, as we ought to be abundantly thankful that we have it as a Lamp to our Feet and a Light to our Paths in the most important Concerns. As to those Mysteries which are spread here and there through the Scriptures, they are no more an Objection against Christianity, than Mysteries in Philosophy are an Argument that there is no Truth in the Study of Nature. Nay, if a thousand Things must be left in God's material Works as beyond our Grasp, can we wonder if more than ten thousand are found in the very Nature of God and in those Works of his which are purely spiritual, and terminate on the Soul?

BUT I would not weary you ; besides, it grows late ; and as the Son of God never sat up late at Night, that we know of (except when he continued all Night in Prayer) but frequently rose early in the Morning ; so I would by no Means occasion your deviating from the Rule of Nature in this
Affair,

Affair, which I have often pointed out to you; and therefore I dismiss you at present. If you like the Theme, we will resume it at a proper Season; when, perhaps, many Things more may offer themselves from this Subject not unworthy our Consideration.





The Second Dialogue.

FATHER.

I AM always glad to have my Children round me ; and my Joy will increase in Proportion as I see you increasing in Wisdom and Stature, in *Piety and mutual Love.*

And if at any Time I may be made useful by any Instructions and Advice to illumine your Minds, and form your Hearts to warmer Devotions, my Joy is fulfilled. But to render Conversation more regular and profitable, we fixed upon *Fire* as our Topick, and talk'd it over in a *philosophick* way chiefly ; I apprehend if we re-consider it in a *religious* View, it may become a yet *more* useful Subject.

MISS FANNY.

INDEED, Papa, I have a little Quarrel with my Brother *Billy*. Two Days ago I scorched my Fingers, as I was playing with a Fire-coal ; (and indeed it is not well yet) while I made a grievous Outcry, he told me that the *Fire*
was

was not hot. I thought at first that he meant that *that very* Fire was not; but he more gravely told me, that *there was no Heat in any Fire.* If I had not lov'd him, I could have beaten him, first to banter my Pain, and afterwards to tell so great an Untruth. I reasoned the Case with him from my sorrowful Experience; but he told me, and stood to it, that wiser People than himself had said so. I assur'd him, however, that I would appeal to you.

FATHER.

THIS is only a Way of speaking taken up to amuse such Children as you; or they would teach you to speak in a more accurate way. *Heat* is the Sensation or Feeling which you experience, and consequently is excited in you by the Action of the Fire; it is the Effect of Fire preying on the Organs of Feeling; consequently the *Heat* is in you, and not in the Fire. The Fire hath Power of producing this Pain, just as a Needle if it enters the Finger produces a Pain. In the same Sense that there is no Pain in the Needle, there is no Heat in the Fire.

MISS FANNY.

OHO! then, Sir, I must say for the Time to come, that the Fire is heating; I must not complain that my Tea is hot when it burns my

Tongue, nor that the Fire is too hot when I sit too near it. And yet, if I am not mistaken, I have heard older and wiser People than myself speak the same Language. I believe, Papa, you have often cautioned me in the same Manner. A Week ago you kindly gave me a roasted Apple, and told me I must take Care how I ate it, for that it was *very hot*; and my Mamma and eldest Sisters, nay, my philosophick Brothers, have used the same Caution, when I have been running hastily to the Tea-Table and caught up my Dish of Tea, they told me it was very hot. Whereas I find that they meant, it would heat me immoderately, and put me to Pain. I wish therefore, Sir, you learned Men would set us a better Example, and introduce common Expressions more agreeable to the Reality and Truth of Things.

FATHER.

MY Dear, I don't know but you have taught us a Lesson; but 'tis hard to break through old and established Forms of speaking. But to proceed.

WHAT a *Blessing* is the Element of Fire so absolutely necessary as it is to the Subsistence of our World! And what a Favour that *Fuel* which is so needful to sustain and feed it! How many important Uses does it subserve? And what Inconveniences

conveniencies are endured where it is scarce and
 dear to the Inhabitants? Without the Fire which
 burns in our Candles and Lamps, what would
 a great Part of our Time in Winter be but ab-
 solute Darkness? Reading, writing, working,
 visiting a Friend would be no more, when the
 Sun hath paid its short Visit to our Hemisphere.
 We must sit still, or grope our Way with
 Anxiety and Danger. Without Fire burning on
 our Hearths, most of the *Productions of our Earth*
 which minister to our Support, or serve for Re-
 freshment and Pleasure, would be either useless
 or unwholesome. Unless our *Flesh and Fish* are
 prepared by Fire, or, in other Words, are
 roasted, boil'd, bak'd, or fry'd, nothing but ex-
 treme Hunger could prevent our loathing Food;
 and at best, the Nourishment it yielded would
 be crude and undigestible. The Stomachs and
 other digestive Powers of the *Lion and Tyger*
 may be adapted to their unprepared Flesh; but
 the more tender Composition of the human Fa-
 brick makes a Cook necessary, and consequently
 Fire to operate upon, break, and dissolve in some
 Measure the Contexture of animal Food. Would
 our Garden Roots and Herbs be fit for the Use
 of Man, either in Point of Nourishment or De-
 light, without Fire? Or how would our *Brewery*
 be carried on, the Riches and Refreshment of
 so many, without this Element?

LET us descend to *Trade*, and enquire how our Manufactures can be carried on without *Fire*. Not only the Silver and Gold must lie by useless in their native Mass, neither stamp'd into Coin, nor formed into Furniture, nor woven into Ornaments, without Fire; but the more useful and necessary Metals of *Iron* and *Brass* would be useless without it. Trace the Iron (for Instance) from the Ore as dug out of the Ground to the last Use it is put to, and we shall find that Fire is necessary to all. What is originally a Stone is brought into *Metal*, made *fluid* or *ductile* by the Energy of Fire. It can't yet be made *malleable* or fit for the Hammer without the Impression of prodigious Fires. When wrought into Toughness, and formed into Bars, and so fit for the Use of the Smith, what can he do with it if Fire does not lend its vehement Aid? His brawny Arms are not equal to its Strength; it is too *stubborn* to be bent, too *brittle* to receive the necessary Shape. But when a penetrating Fire has softened its Contexture, and he desires to form it into some useful Furniture for our Houses, or our Horses, to plow up our Fields, to turn up our Gardens, and a thousand Purposes besides, how readily does the Metal fall in with his Design? If then the Plough and its Furniture are necessary to our Fields, if the Ax or Hammer, the Knife or Pruning Hook

(not

(not to mention the Sword, the Spear, the Cannon, or any other horrid Instruments of Death) are necessary, so necessary is the Element of Fire to form them to their proper Shape, to make them what they are, and to fit them for their respective Uses.

BUT if we go no farther than the Comfort *we now enjoy*, what a Blessing is Fire? How fit to awake, and how worthy to be itself the Matter of our Praise? The Respite this Apartment now affords us from the congealing Power of the frigid Air beyond the Limits of these Walls, in distant Parts of this House, should melt our too often freezing Hearts into Gratitude; as on the other Hand, when we stand but an Hour exposed to the nocturnal Atmosphere, we may well be led to cry out with shivering Lips and deep-felt Anguish, "*Who can stand before his Coldness?*" When the Ice is cast abroad in *Morsels*, when the fleecy Snow descends to robe the Ground in the spotless Livery of Winter, and the *Hoar-frosts* are spread abroad as the *Asbes*, how severe the Season? how intensely grievous the Sensation? But if we return to this Parlour, where Air is so sweetly tempered by the Fire before us, what Heart can choose but thaw with the Ice and dissolve with the Snow in Gratitude, Love, and Praise to our great Benefactor?

Hath

Hath he provided Wood to grow out of the Earth, not only for more elegant Uses, but a Surplus of what is coarse for this necessary Purpose also? Let our Hearts join (united with the sacred Bandage of Heaven-born Charity) as so many Rods in this Bundle or Faggot, to bless the Name of the Lord. Let us offer a Sacrifice which shall ascend higher than those Sparks, and mount aloft as far beyond this Smoke or this Flame, as it is a purer offering.

MISS MOLLY.

You have, Sir, put us in Mind of our Duty with the greatest Propriety, by shewing us our Obligations to Providence for every Faggot we burn; but there is another Sort of Fewel, which I have often admired; I mean *Coal*, a mere Negro in its Look, filthy to touch, and yet in its Uses how beneficent? What is it, pray, Sir? Is it Earth? How can it burn? What can be its Nature to make it so useful?

FATHER.

COAL is a black, sulphurous, inflammable Substance, dug out of the Bowels of the Earth, is adapted to the most general Use of Fire, and serves the most important Purposes of Fuel. Ask those who inhabit the torrid Zone of the Glass-houses, who refine our Sugars, who prepare many of
our

our Medicines, and the Manufacturer who throws so various a Dye upon his Goods, Woollen, Linen, or Silken, and each will tell you, that without this Fossil, he could scarce carry on his Designs. Coal is no small Article in Trade, Navigation, and Exportation; and whatever there is of it in other Countries, none like the Coal of this Country for Quantity or Goodness. We sell the subterraneous Contents of our Island to Foreigners, and they are glad to barter their Silver and Gold for these sooty Productions. Happy Island! that is so fruitful under Ground as well as above! which though it does not pretend to boast of that which is never found, but under the most barren, uncultivated Rocks, and the most scorching Rays of the Sun, yet it is indulged with nobler providential Gifts so well adapted to the Necessities and Conveniences of its own Inhabitants and those of its Neighbours. Thousands are cherish'd and warm'd by the Produce of *British* Fire, in every Manufacture sent abroad to cloath the naked, in every Glass Bottle melted into its designed Shape, and filled with *British* Beer brewed by the Help of the same Element; the one in a more intense, the other in a milder Degree. Let *young Men and Maidens, old Men and Children*, who are daily tasting the diffusive Goodness of the most High in various Forms, *praise the Lord!*

Miss

MISS MOLLY.

BUT, Sir, is *Fire* always a *Blessing of Providence*? Does not omnipotent Righteousness sometimes make it the Instrument of its Vengeance?

FATHER.

No Doubt, my Dear, but it does frequently and in many Ways. Though it has never received a flaming Commission against our Dwelling, yet how many of our Fellow-creatures have suffered this Way? It is one of the Methods by which the blessed God hath carried on and maintained his awful Controversy, *The Lord will come with Fire to render his Anger with Fury and his Rebuke with Flames of Fire. For by Fire and by his Sword will the Lord plead**. How many by sudden and unconquerable Fires have been impoverished, yea, consumed or suffocated in their Beds? Upon how many Towns and Cities have those Words of the Lord to Jerusalem been verified, *Then will I kindle a Fire in the Gates thereof, and it shall devour the Palaces of Jerusalem, and it shall not be quenched†*. Their long Ranges of new uniform Buildings, have been destroyed by Conflagrations. *Jehovah* hath been known by the Judgments which he executes, and hath written his Anger in Characters

* Isaiah, lxvi. 15.

† Jer. xvii. 27.

of Flame. When God hath sealed the Commission for Fire to consume, its Rage has been uncontrollable. In vain hath the Fire-engine poured its unceasing Torrents; the Vigour and Dexterity of the united Inhabitants of Towns and Cities have been all in vain, till he who *divideth the Flames of Fire* saith to them, as to the proud Waves of the Sea, *hitherto shall ye go, and no farther*. Awful Sight! when the magnificent Marble, the polish'd Glass, the carved Cornice, the massy Beams, and what was perhaps the curious and splendid Works of many Years, is turned into a Heap of Ruins! Where are now the superb Hangings, the figur'd Ceilings, the rais'd Wainscot, the painted China, the antique Services of Plate, the boasted Collection of a Family, and transmitted from Ancestors whose Names are almost forgotten? Alas! they were Vanity before, and are now Vexation of Spirit. How instructive a Lesson does this afford us? How uncertain the Tenure of that Man's Riches who hath nothing better than these Things for his Possessions? A beautiful Building To-day! an Heap of Ashes To-morrow? Happy the Christian who, when his earthly House is demolished, can look up and say, *I have a Building of God, a House not made with Hands eternal in the Heavens* *. Can I, my dear rising Hopes,

* 2 Cor. v. 1.

give you better Advice that to make it your Care to secure a Portion in that Good which is not perishable, which is inaccessible to Accidents, and on which the Teeth of Time can never fasten to make it decay or moulder away ? How desirous Men are to be secured against disastrous Fires, appears by their causing their Houses to be *insured*; but there is no Insurance like that of the celestial Dwelling to the Saints: the *Promise and Oath* of an all-powerful and faithful God are inviolable and everlasting. It is Security itself. One thing more this Point teaches us, even to join ourselves with them who put themselves and all they have under the divine Care, nor venture to lay themselves to rest but under the Shadow of his Wings who never slumbers nor sleeps.

ELDEST SON.

BUT permit me, Sir, to observe a more terrible Catastrophe of this Kind than any has been mentioned; I mean the Conflagration of *Sodom* and the other Cities of the Plain in *Abraham's* Time. How shocking their Impurities? How terrible the divine Judgment? How pleasant and fruitful had been their Situation? Even as the Garden of the Lord, as the Land of Egypt! *But* Sin universally flagrant calls aloud to God's Justice, and that can easily blast our Blessings in
their

their most vigorous Bloom ; thus Plenty shall give way to Scarcity, if the affronted Governor of the World gives the dread Command ; thus barren Rocks, burning Sands, killing Frosts at one Time, and Mildews at another, have notified the divine Jealousy, and declared his spotless Purity. Thus what was a Country fruitful to a Proverb before, is, by reason of Wickedness, become a Proverb the very reverse. Was ever Destruction more entire ? Was there ever a Monument more striking ? Nothing now but a stinking Lake ; no Building remains, nor any thing to testify that there had been Cities, unless (as Travellers tell us*) some Ruins had been discovered when the Waters have been remarkably low. *They suffer the Vengeance of eternal Fire*, and their Land is never to emerge out of those Waters. I have often indulged my Imagination to think what a Consternation those Cities must be in when the fiery Shower not only began, but proceeded. Miserable Creatures, whither can they flee ? If they run from one Quarter to another, a liquid Torrent pursues their Steps, meets, overtakes, and burns them together. Would they run into any Dwelling, they are all in Flames already. O the Heart-rending Cries of one and another ! Whither now shall the fond Parent convey his Infant-Care to hide it, till this amazing Storm be blown

* Maundrell's Travels, p. 85.

over ?

over? Could he perish with a single Destruction, or die by a solitary Wound, it would not be so terrible. ' But, Oh! says his howling Tongue, ' my Son, O my Daughter! distracting Names to ' me now!—and who shall rescue my Parents? ' Must they, must we, must all be involved in ' one common Destruction? See the vengeful ' Fire falls upon their Habitation! I distinguish ' their Roarings amidst the mingled Cries around ' me.—Merciful Heaven! righteous Deity! ' this last Breath, this flaming Tongue, but ' serves me to add, *It is a just Desolation**—
 But what do I spy yonder? Alas! the Bride and Bridegroom, (if *Sodom* could furnish so virtuous a Sight) that appeared a little while ago in so much Pomp, and trod that very Street with so much Ostentation, and drew the attentive Eye of the City! See them in each others Arms all in Agony now! O Embrace the very Reverse to Yesterday's! the Musick which led the Way with its soft-enchancing Notes, is changed into the most terrible Shrieks and Howlings. O short Festivity! where's now the jovial Bowl, the fra-

* It may vindicate this Representation of their relative Woe to observe, that the social Passions, however they may be perverted or abused, are not to be erased from Nature; and, though long oppressed, the Desolations of this Hour would, in some Measure, restore their elastic Spring.

grant Ointment, the Song of the Drunkard? O the *Hell* that is rained down out of *Heaven*! O the *Hell* in the Conscience, pierced now to the Quick with dire Reflections! "We had our Reproofs and our Preachers, but we disregarded all; as the Horse rusheth into the Battle and will not be restrained, disdaineth the Curb and rages under him that straitens him, till the fatal Arrow, or perhaps a Shower of them, pierce his Heart. Thus it was with us in *Sodom*, and thus with our Neighbours associated with us in Wickedness, and the Judge supreme has made us Companions in Destruction. Even the Crown of *Sodom's* King can't now secure his guilty Head from deserved Punishment. His Courtiers taught him to defy the King of Kings, flattered his Vanity, and perswaded him into the Pride of Self-sufficiency, the Folly and Wickedness of which this Day's Experience abundantly declares. Where are his Guards? Will devouring Judgments regard his Imperial Robe? Will the pompous Palace shelter him? All, all are but a Refuge of Lies, and shall be swept away. *Who shall stand in his Sight when once he is angry?*"

BUT, Sir, there is a Peculiarity of Expression in this History, which I beg the Favour of you

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to explain. It is said that *Jehovah* rained upon *Sodom* and upon *Gomorrhah* Brimstone and Fire from *Jehovah* out of Heaven *.

FATHER.

IF you look into the former Chapter, and the former Part of this, you will find there were *Three* that came to *Abraham*. One of these *Three* seems to be the uncreated Angel, the Second Person in the Trinity; for you find, that *Two* left *Abraham* first and went to *Sodom*, but *Abraham* stood yet before *him* of the *Three*, who was *Jehovah* †. So that the Expression seems to denote, that God the Son (to whom all Judgment was committed ‡) rained from God the Father this strange destructive Fire.

MISS MOLLY.

BUT I apprehend there is one Sort of Fire which you have not yet touch'd upon, viz. *Burning Mountains*. I have heard of fiery Eruptions from under Ground. Is it true? Where are these subterraneous Furnaces? Do any live near them? I have heard something of them, and would gladly know more. Methinks my Curiosity awakes more than ever to be acquainted

* Gen. xix. 24. † Ibid. xviii. 22. ‡ John v. 22, 27.

with

with these uncommon and awful Appearances of Providence.

FATHER.

I BELIEVE your *Eldest Brother* can give us an Account of *Volcano's*. As he has convers'd with Books, such a History as this must have come in his Way. We shall be obliged to him to favour us upon this Head.

ELDEST SON.

I ESTEEM, Sir, every such Hint of your Pleasure as obligatory as a Command, and therefore, though doubtful of my Ability to give an Account accurate enough to entertain your Attention; yet depending on your Candor, and submitting to your Correction, I shall make an Attempt. I think the two most noted Mountains of this Sort are *Ætna* in *Sicily*, and *Vesuvius* in the Kingdom of *Naples*. The Story of *Ætna* is the most ancient, as *Thucydides*, 450 Years before our Saviour's Time, gives an Account of it; *Virgil* also, near the Birth of Christ, mentions it. I don't know any Account of the latter, till 500 Years after the former; a dreadful Eruption from which was fatal to *Pliny*, through his too great Curiosity. Most amazing are the Accounts of these two fiery Mountains which have been published. Sometimes only a black Smoke arises, at other Times an hideous rumb-

ling Noise is heard ; by and by there have been Thunders and Lightnings, attended with Tremblings and Concussions of the Earth. Then perhaps the Smoke hath become bright and shining, the Stones have crashed and flew abroad, and then fallen into their former Den. But sometimes these Explosions have taken place to such a Degree, that even Pieces of Rocks have been whirl'd up into the Air, as if light as a Tennis-ball or Sky-rocket. Such has been the Power of these Mountains within, that at Times, as that in the Year 1632, an ingenious Philosopher imagined that Fragments of Rocks of 300 pound Weight were tossed no less than three Miles into the Air : And yet these Explosions are not the worst ; for at certain Seasons the melted vitrified Bowels of the Earth have boil'd up as a Pot, till the dreadful Scum has flow'd over and deluged every Thing in its Way. The fiery Stream hath continued some Days ; one Wave rolling upon another till it hath reached the Sea ; and through the powerful Consistence of the Fire it contained, hath even there kept in a body unextinguish'd for the Space of a Mile or two. Who can meditate without Horror on the Destruction such a flaming Inundation brings ? Farms with all their fruitful Plantations are swallow'd up ; ripening Harvests are buried under the fiery Surge ; Corn-fields, Olive-yards,

and

and Vineyards are blended in one general Ruin. Once a Stream from *Ætna*, we are told, overwhelmed fourteen Towns and Villages, containing 3 or 4000 Inhabitants; the very Noise was heard 60 Miles. This Catastrophe happened in the Year 1669. The Torrent of fiery Brimstone first took its Road to the Sea, and afterwards it bent its Course towards the City *Catanea*, that very *Catanea* which was a few Years after entirely swallow'd up.

THE latest Account of Mount *Ætna* I have met with, was published by the Royal Society of *London*. In their Philosophical Transactions they tell us (from the Account sent by the Magistrates of the City of *Mascoli*) " that after a
 " great Quantity of Flame and Smoke, attended
 " with a horrible Noise, and Showers of Stone
 " and black Sand, on *Monday March 10, 1755*,
 " there sprang from the Bottom of the Mountain, as it were, a River of Water, which in
 " the Space of half a Quarter of an Hour not
 " only overflowed to a considerable Distance the
 " rugged Land near the Foot of the Hill; but,
 " upon the Water's suddenly going off, levell'd
 " all the Roughness and Inequalities of the Surface, and made the Whole a large Plain of
 " Sand. A Country-fellow, who was present
 " at so strange a Sight, had the Curiosity to

“ touch this Water, and thereby scalded the
 “ Ends of his Fingers. After the Water had
 “ done flowing, there sprang from the same
 “ Opening a small Stream of Fire, which flowed
 “ 24 Hours. On *Tuesday*, about a Mile be-
 “ low this Opening, there arose another Stream
 “ of Fire, which being in Breadth about 400
 “ Feet, like a River began to overflow the
 “ adjoining Fields, and actually continues with
 “ the same Course, having extended itself about
 “ two Miles, and seeming to threaten the
 “ Neighbourhood.”

BESIDES these, Sir, you know better than I
 that there are *many* of these *ignivomous* Moun-
 tains scatter'd over our Globe. In *Iceland* we
 find a *Mount Hecla*. In the West-Indies near
Guatimala in *South America*, there is a Moun-
 tain that vomits Fire in such a Manner, that
 huge Pieces of Rocks are hurled with as much
 Vehemence as Balls out of a Cannon; and in
 the Night a written Letter hath been read by the
 Light of it at the Distance of three Miles. If
 we turn to the *East-Indies*, the *Dutch* (who by
 their extended Trade and Settlements are best
 acquainted with that Part of the World) inform
 us, that in the Island of *Java* a Mountain broke
 out for the first Time in 1586, discharging such
 Quantities of burning Brimstone, that above

10,000 Persons in the Country were destroyed; that it cast out great Pieces of Rocks, accompanied with so dismal a Smoke, that the Sun was covered with it, and the Day almost turned into Night. And they tell us, that the Mountain *Gonnapi*, that continued burning seventeen Years, broke from the rest with a terrible Report in *April* in the said Year 1586; throwing out a dreadful Quantity of burning Matter and red-hot Stones two Yards long, besides such prodigious Numbers of a smaller Sort, that they rendered the Sea in a Manner unsailable, whereby the Fish were suffocated, and the Waters boiled as in a Kettle with a Fire under it. And the like in *Sumatra*, and many other Places. Nay, I have read of Sailors in the *Archipelago* who have felt their Vessels shaken, retarded, and tossed, and the Sea all about them convulsed and agitated to a great Degree; and that afterwards they have seen the Surface of the Water overspread with Pumice Stones, arising from the Bottom of the Sea; which half-burnt Stones could arise only from the Eruptions of Fire. Nay, (once more) in the Year 1707, there sprung up a new Island from the Bottom of the Sea, near the Island *Santorini*; from which, about the End of *August*, the subterraneous Fires (which at first made a terrible Rumbling) burst out with such violent Noise, as if six or seven Pieces

of Cannon were discharged at the same Time ; and made continually new Rents and Openings, through which sometimes a great Quantity of Ashes, and sometimes so vast a Number of little glowing Stones were cast up into the Air, that they made another little Island ; and there were frequently seen huge burning Pieces of Rocks tossed into the Air, like Bombs and Carcasses, with such force, that they were carried seven Miles before they were dropt into the Sea. Such Things I have read in *Nieuwentyt's* Religious Philosopher, which you were so good as to put into my Hand.

I CAN seldom think of these Subjects of late, but it reminds me of that more awful Description Dr. *Watts* hath given us of *Jehovah's* Descent on Mount *Sinai*.

Ætna shall be nam'd no more ;

Ætna, the Torch of *Sicily*,

Not half so high

Her Lightnings fly ;

Not half so loud her Thunders roar

Cross the *Sicanian* Sea, to fright th' *Italian* Shore.

Behold the sacred Hill ! its trembling Spire

Quakes at the Terrors of the Fire,

While all below its verdant Feet

Stagger and reel under th' Almighty Weight.

Prefs'd

Prefs'd with a greater than feign'd *Atlas*' Load
 Deep-groan'd the Mount ; it never bore
 Infinity before ;
 It bow'd and shook beneath the Burthen of a
 God.

Fresh Horrors seize the Camp, Despair,
 And dying Groans torment the Air,
 And Shrieks and Swoons and Deaths were there.
 The bellowing Thunder and the Lightning's
 Blaze

Spread thro' the Host a wild Amaze ;
 Darkness on every Soul and pale was every Face.
 Confus'd and dismal were the Cries
 " *Let Moses speak, or Israel dies.*"
 Moses the spreading Terror feels
 No more the Man of God conceals
 His shivering and surprize ;
 Yet with recovering Mind commands
 Silence and deep Attention thro' the *Hebrew*
 Bands, &c.

FATHER.

I BELIEVE the Company join their Acknowledgments with mine for this History. In this Glass we may view a little of the amazing Power of Jehovah, and must see reason to own, *with God is terrible Majesty*. How should the *profane* tremble at these Exhibitions of the unopposable Power

Power of the Most High? *The Heathen raged, the Kingdoms were moved, he uttered his Voice, the Earth melted**. When he goeth forth as a Judge to take Vengeance, *a Fire goeth before him and burneth up his Enemies round about him, yea the Hills melt like Wax at the Presence of the Lord†*. O! who can stand in his Sight when once he is angry? How feeble, how vain, how ridiculous would the Attempts of human Power be to put by or thrust back his Hand, when he cometh forth and maketh a Way for his Anger? As well might a Nut-shell stop in its Career a First-rate Man of War and dash it in Pieces, as well might a Feather cope with a stormy Whirlwind, or dry Stubble bound devouring Flames, which is only Fuel to increase them. O my Children, fear the Lord, and learn to give Glory to him. Dread above all Things his Displeasure. Rest not an Hour under *these* Frowns, which are infinitely worse than Death. Cry mightily, fly to the Redeemer, and shelter yourselves by Faith under *his* Merits who is, *who* alone is mighty to save. Highly esteem him as the Rock of your Salvation. *When the divine Wrath is kindled but a little*, and a Sense of that Wrath is at all impressed upon the Conscience, the Cry will be, *Blessed are all they that have put their Trust in him*. But if the most High, who does

* Psal. xlv. 6.

† Psal. xcvi. 3, and 5.

all these Things, is your Covenant God and Friend, you may take an awful Delight in viewing his Perfections. *He that toucheth the Mountains and they smoke*, and hath all these Magazines of Fire under his Direction and at his Disposal, will employ them, if there is Occasion, in the Defence of his People; for he promises, among other Things, to be *a Wall of Fire* round about *Jerusalem*, both to defend his Flock against the Beasts of the Wilderness, and to burn up those who attempt their Destruction.

THUS I would, my dear Children, dismiss you, as I would *myself* retire, under an affecting Sense of these most important Things; intreating that the believing Meditation on them may animate us to peculiar Ardour in committing ourselves to the Care of the Shepherd of Israel during the Watches of the ensuing Night.



The Third Dialogue.

FATHER.



S I have always, my dear Children, treated you with Tendernefs, fo I have thought it my Duty, with a View to your Intereft, to encourage you to come with all your Difficulties to me, that I might, if poffible, direct you to Relief. If therefore any of you have any Thing to offer referable to the Point we have been upon, we fhall at leaft hear with Candor.

MISS MOLLY.

YOUR Declaration, Sir, gives me fo fair an Occafion, that I fhould afterwards regret it if I now let it flip. There is a Place of Scripture which I have fometimes thought obfcure ; it is a Prediction of John Baptift relating to our Lord, *He fhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoft and with Fire* *.

* Matt. iii. 11.

FATHER.

FATHER.

I AM glad you mention it, as I was purposing to speak next of the Influences of the divine Spirit, as compared to *Fire*. We may then paraphrase the Words mentioned thus: "I (says *John* :) administer only a Water-Baptism, as a
 " Sign of what you may hope for, and of the
 " Repentance which you are obliged to: And
 " here I stop; but there is one at Hand infinitely
 " my Superior, who will pour out his Spirit
 " upon you; which, as it will be represented
 " by a lambent Flame, will act as a spiritual
 " Fire upon your Hearts; for his Operation
 " will illuminate, kindle, pious and devout Affections, yea, purify and warm the Soul." When Ministers baptize, the *visible* Character and Relation of the Baptized is changed; but when Christ by his Spirit baptizes, a *real* Change is wrought, the Heart is formed anew. By Water the *Outward* Man is cleansed; by the Application of the Spirit, the *hidden* Man of the Heart. The Metaphor is taken from the Purification of Metals, the most effectual of which is by *Fire*. Sin then is the Dross of the Soul, it hath tarnished all its Powers (*How is the Gold become dim, and the most fine Gold changed?*) Such is the spreading Corruption of the human Heart, that there is not one but has Reason to complain, and when under the convincing Influences

fluences of the Spirit, he does complain, *my Gold is become Dross*. But when a Person is sanctified, he is *refined as Silver is refined* *. What Fire then is to the impure Metal, that the Spirit of Grace is to the Soul. For this Reason the Blessed Redeemer was predicted and promised before he made his Appearance under the Character of a Refiner. *He shall be a Refiner's Fire—and he shall sit as a Refiner and Purifier of Silver, and he shall purify the Sons of Levi, and purge them as Gold and Silver* † This Act of Christ carries in it an inward and most entire Change. He will not only wash away the Spot contracted from without, but will take away the Dross which is found within, and separate from Men those indwelling Corruptions which render their Faculties worthless, unprofitable, and base, and so make their Powers, like Gold refined, both valuable and useful. For this Sanctification he laid a Foundation in his Death; *for he gave himself for us, that he might sanctify and cleanse us*. Then it was that he procured the Spirit of Holiness, and in consequence of the Merit of his Death and his Intercession, the Spirit is sent down, this great Refiner, into the Hearts of his People. And, O how blessed and glorious are the Effects of his Approach, Operation, and Indwelling? As Fire emits Light and

* Zech. xiii. 9.

† Mal. iii. 2 and 3.

Heat,

Heat, and produces a mighty Change upon every Object it penetrates, so does the Spirit when he comes into the Mind and Heart. The dark Understanding is enlightened, and the moral Night turned into Day; by the Rays of this celestial Fire the frozen Heart is thaw'd, stupid Sinners awake to Sensibility, are melted, and made to cry out upon the Discovery of divine Grace, *How did our Hearts burn within us?* And as in material Fire there is always a Tendency towards Heaven (for it naturally mounts upwards) thus it is with the Soul born from on high that feels the new creating refining Influences; it seeks those Things which are above.

LET my Children learn to value highly the glorious Redeemer under this Character. What a Heap of Dross, fit only to be trodden under Foot, hath Sin made us? Wretched Heart! (may each of us say) that favours so much that which is earthly and carnal! bewitched and captivated with Joys and Sorrows that are sensual! unworthy thy great Original, and a Reproach to thy rational Powers! But how admirable the Change, when divine Grace enters the Soul? When the Eye is opened to discern the Beauties of Holiness, and the sublime Glories of the Godhead, nothing then can satisfy the Man short of Communion with the Most High, and a

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Blessed.

Blessedness in his Likeness and Smiles? Then he is enabled to tread the Gratifications of Sense under Foot, to despise the Gaieties of Courts, the Sceptres of Princes, and the Victories and Triumphs of a *Cæsar*, in Comparison of his being a Child of God, the Enjoyment of his Love, an Interest in the Promises of the new Covenant and the first Fruits of celestial Joys. As Heaven is high above the Earth, as God is superior to the Creature, as the Soul is preferable to the material Body in Nature and Duration; so refined is the Employment, the Taste and the Converse of the Man above what it was before. He that was once a Dupe to brutal Gratifications, becomes a Fellow-Commoner with Angels: And as a Person who is taken to Court, and hath eaten and conversed with the Nobility and Princes, cannot afterward take up with the rustick Diet, the mean Apparel and flat Conversation of the Cottage whence he sprang; so the Christian who hath obtained by the *Lot* of free Grace* a divine Nature, cannot think of spending his Days and employing his Powers in carnal Acquisitions as once he did. Invite then, my dear young Creatures, the good Spirit to take up his Abode in *your* Hearts. Give him a Welcome suitable

* Εἰς ᾧ καὶ ἐκληρώθημεν, in whom we also have obtained an Inheritance or Lot. Eph. i. 11. Λαχοῦσι πικτω. 2 Pet. i. 1.—obtained by Lot—Faith.

to the Work he comes upon ; and, as far as may be, co-operate with him, or at least (to keep my Eye upon the Element before us) *quench not the Spirit*. Withhold not the Fewel of Ordinances ; for by Prayer, Attendance on the Word, frequent Meditation, and other Duties of Religion, this Fire is commonly fed. Dread more than Death Laziness and presumptuous Sins ; for Water is not more opposite to material Fire, than Sins against Light and Conviction to the sacred Fire of the Spirit's Influences. Blow up this Fire in each other, my dear Children, mutually encourage every good Motion. Pray one for another ; and, in a Word, be this your Ambition, next to your *own* spiritual Advantage, to be instrumental of Good to a *Brother* or *Sister*. And what you do in this Affair, do it heartily, and with a *holy Zeal*. But let me consider the Particulars of this sacred Fire, for it burns in several Forms, especially in that of *religious Zeal* ; which Word in the Greek literally denotes the *hissing* Noise made by melted, liquid Metal cast into Water ; or the Metaphor may be taken from the hissing Noise which Water makes when it grows hot over the Fire. *Zeal* then is moral Fire ; if *wrong* in its Principle or its Direction, it is the Soul's *Wildfire*. It hisses, affrights, and scorches all about it. It shews itself in Envy, Quarrels, groundless Jealousies, and misguided

VOL. II. E Eagerness.

Eagerness. But the *Zeal*, which is the Fruit of the Spirit, the Earnest of eternal Ardours before the Throne, is the Soul's Vigor in acting for God and his Glory, for the Edification of the Mediator's Kingdom, the Propagation of sacred Knowledge, vital Holiness, the Reformation of Manners, and the Salvation of Men's Souls. Thus in the political World we call him a *zealous* Subject, who acts vigorously for his King and Country, ever attentive to the Honour of the one, and the Interest of the other; improving every Opportunity to promote them, and kindling into Resentment and Opposition against those who shew themselves Enemies to either. This divine Fire is the Reverse of that Sloth and Lukewarmness which the Gospel so much condemns, and which expose Churches to be spewed out of Christ's Mouth and rejected for ever, as the Aversion of his Nature. And while we take our Aim right, how agreeable is it to *right Reason* that we should be zealous? Where Importance is inscribed on the Object, where the greatest Consequences attend the Issue of the Undertaking, where the very End of our Being and Redemption is to be answered, and where the Issue must be the Ruin or Salvation of the Soul, and that through the Duration of eternal Ages, shall we not bestir ourselves? Where Heaven and all its Joys is the Mark of

2

the

the Prize, shall we not run? What courageous Zeal inspired the Heart of *Luther*! who when invited to appear before the Emperor, and cautioned against trusting to his Safe-conduct, remembering how the publick Faith had been violated at the Council of *Constance* against *John Hus* and *Jerome* of *Prague*, boldly answered, "As he had a Call, he would enter the City of Worms, in the Name of the Lord *Jesus*, though there were as many Devils there as Tiles upon the Houses." Thus he imitated the blessed *Paul*, who, glowing with unequalled Degrees of this sacred Fire, resolved to persevere in preaching *Christ* crucified, and displaying his amiable Glories, though Prisons, Bonds, and Death stood in his Way. *I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the Name of the Lord Jesus* *. And well might the Apostle, who was so zealous himself, inculcate the same Temper on others. *Not slothful in Business, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord* †. If you give way to Sloth, my dear Children, you cannot fill up your Relations nor accomplish the Business of common Life; and therefore you should guard against it, and rouse yourselves from it. Much more should you be fervent in Spirit serving the Lord. Was I to translate this Word literally, I must say *boiling-hot in Spirit*.

* Acts xxi. 13.

† Romans xii. 11.

When therefore you wait upon the Lord in the Duties of Religion, how ought you to stir up yourselves, that all your Powers may be awake and wakeful? That the Mind may be intent, and the Affections invigorated? *David* not only prays, but *cries* in his Prayer. I will cry *with my Voice* *; hereby noting the Energy within, such a Constraint as could not be stifled in the breast, but must shew itself by the Voice. He was like a Person in Distress and Danger, who cannot keep his Case to himself, cannot help crying aloud, when drowning; or suppress the inward Importunity. This is represented by our Saviour under the Expression of *knocking* † at the Door of Mercy; here is Vehemence arising from a View and Sense of the Importance of those Things which are the Matter of our Request. As therefore *Fire* puts Life and Motion into the Liquors that are set over it, so Grace in the Soul puts Vigour into its Powers; fain would the Christian, when this Zeal burns, perform a Worship suitable to the *Being* he adores, and the *Soul* whose Profit he aims at. Shall I here repeat an Extract out of Bishop *Hall's* Contemplations?

“ An Arrow, if it be drawn up but a little way,
 “ goes not far; if it be pulled up to the Head,
 “ it flies strongly and pierces deeply. Thus
 “ Prayer, if it be but dribbled forth of careless

* Psal. xxvii. 7.

† Luke xi. 9.

“ Lips,

" Lips, it falls down at our Feet. It is the
 " Strength of Ejaculation that sends it up into
 " Heaven, and fetches down a Blessing thence.
 " The very unjust Judge cannot bear the Wi-
 " dow's Clamour. Heartless Motions do but
 " bespeak a Denial; whereas fervent Suits offer
 " a sacred Violence to Earth and Heaven. It
 " is not the *Arithmetick* of our Prayers, how
 " many, nor the *Rhetorick* of our Prayers, how
 " eloquent, nor the *Geometry* of our Prayers, how
 " long, nor the *Musick* of our Prayers, the
 " Sweetness of our Voice, nor the *Logick* of our
 " Prayers and the Method of them; but the
 " Divinity of them, which God so much affect-
 " eth. *The fervent Prayer of the Righteous avail-*
 " *eth much.*"

ONCE more, perhaps *Fire* and *Flame* are
 never more frequently adapted to any thing of a
 Moral Nature, than when *Love* is spoken of.
 Whether the Writers are grave Divines or wan-
 ton Poets, the Passion of Love is represented un-
 der this Emblem.

Descend, celestial Fire,
 And seize me from above,
 Melt me in Flames of pure Desire,
 A Sacrifice to Love.

Again,

The Beauty of my native Land:
Immortal Love inspires,
I burn, I burn with strong Desires;
And sigh and wait the high Command, &c.

WATTS.

Love is too often the Fire of Hell enkindled in the Soul, and too seldom a Spark struck by the Hand of God. The adulterous Passion is sensual and brutish, and burns downward with inverted Flames towards the infernal Pit. On the other Hand, when a *Coal from God's Altar* hath touched the Heart, it flames towards Heaven. The blessed God, the incomparable Redeemer, and the Resemblances of him who is the Fountain and Standard of all Excellence, are embraced and delighted in. O! what Love to Jesus Christ glowed in the Heart of *St. Jerome*, when he cried out in one of his Epistles to his Friend, "If my Father stand before me, if my
" Mother hang upon me, if my Brethren should
" press about me, I would break through my
" Brethren, I would throw down my Mother,
" tread under Foot my Father, that I might
" cleave the faster to Jesus Christ my Saviour." O for such a Fire to so glorious an Object, *whose*
Coals

Coals have a most vehement Flame, which many Waters cannot quench, nor the Floods drown it !

BUT I have done with this long Harangue—
if any of you are inclined to start a new Point,
I am ready to attend to it.

MISS MOLLY.

I AM afraid I shall be thought too much of a Querist, otherwise I would propose something further which may give you and my Brothers an Opportunity of discoursing profitably to us. It is a Point too, which this Fire hath often put me in Mind of.

ELDEST SON.

SIR, I beg Leave to answer my dear Sister's Apology. I dare say what she has to propose will not be impertinent. The Modesty of her Sex, joined with a natural Diffidence, makes her too shy; I believe if she is too forward now, it will be the first Time. I am confident her Friends like her best when her Tongue is most at Liberty; her good Sense, her Piety, her Tenderness and Softness of Disposition—

MISS MOLLY.

HUSH, Brother, this is not kind; had you talk'd in this extravagant Way to a Company who

were Strangers to me, they might be ready to imagine your Sister was something extraordinary, the very Phoenix of her Sex ; but all here know otherwise. And were it not that I know you love me, and would not expose me by drawing a Character for me with a sarcastick Pencil, I should take it much amiss to be laugh'd at. However, I hope my good Brother will not take it amiss, if I am complimented into Silence ; and that my Father will excuse me that I am thrown too far into Confusion to proceed.

ELDEST SON.

I SELDOM flatter, and yet more seldom err on the other Extreme. I dare not expose *any* to Ridicule, or turn Characters in Company into Contempt ; and should I play the Droll upon a *dear Sister*, this would be most inexcusable. But should I go on to expatiate on the Truth of what I have said, it must be by an Induction of Particulars which will necessarily set off my Sister's Conduct ; the Consequence of this will be, that if I have err'd already, I shall err still more. And if I have deprived myself of Entertainment from her Lips by what I have said already, I am afraid her Silence will be confirmed, and her Mouth, which has often fed and feasted many, will be *sealed* up. I intreat then that you will not make me more obnoxious to the Resentment

ment of the Family, as I have been the innocent Occasion of breaking in upon the delightful Conversation in which we were engaged.

MISS MOLLY.

WHAT shall I say? You have embarrassed me much! Silence would best please, but I would not be thought sullen. And having little to say worthy the Regard of so good Company, should I apologize too much, and be perswaded to speak at length, I should expose myself the more; I will therefore tell my Father what I was going to say. Since we have been upon this Theme *Fire*, my Thoughts have been frequently working towards the Fires of *Smithfield* in *Queen Mary's Days*, and those horrid Flames which the Torch of Persecution hath lighted up in many Parts of the World; Cruelties which are the Reproach of the human Nature! But that any thing of this Kind should be found in the Christian Church, still more amazes me! Sometimes I have represented these Fires to myself as the Saint's Vehicle to Glory, and been ready to call them *Elijah's* fiery Chariot, in which they ascended to the World of Spirits. Sometimes my Thoughts have entered deep into the Cruelty of the Church of *Rome*, and when I have viewed her in the prophetick Glass, under the Mystery of the great Whore, making herself drunk with
the

the Blood of the Saints, *I have wondered with great Admiration.* At other Times, with Surprise and Joy I have contemplated the Constancy of these Disciples of Jesus, who have borne the fiery Trial. In the one I have seen much of Hell, in the other much of Heaven. In the one the Malice of Satan, as an Opposer of Christ in his Cause and Kingdom and a Murtherer, as he was from the Beginning; in the other, wondrous Communications from their glorious faithful Head, which made them more than Conquerors. But as my good Father knows more of the one and other, I would entreat his Thoughts on both.

FATHER.

I HAVE trained you up to an Acquaintance with the Book of *Martyrs*, that I might lead you into a just Abhorrence of that *antichristian* Church, which hath in so many Ages employed her diabolical Rage upon the faithful Servants of Jesus. I have at Times, in my Converse with you, dwelt upon the Errors of that Church; Errors which seem to sap the Foundations of Christianity, as they are calculated by the Maxims of worldly Policy, to promote the Grandeur, Pride, Covetousness, and tyrannical Superiority of the Clergy over the Laity, which visibly bear the Character St. *James* gives of the Wisdom from
beneath,

beneath, viz. *earthly, sensual, and devilish**. Christ tells us that *his Kingdom* is not of this World; but they have made that Kingdom on which they have imposed his Name, to consist in Pomp and Plenty, in riding over the Necks of Princes, and subjecting Persons, Properties, and Consciences too to their extravagant Impositions. The Doctrines of Transubstantiation, the Infallibility of the Pope, the Pains of Purgatory, and the Power of the Priest to deliver Souls out of it, the Necessity of auricular Confession, Absolution from the Priest, the Celibacy of the Clergy, &c. appear to be introduced by cunning Men to aggrandize the Church in general or the Priests in particular, and to keep the People in a servile Dependance upon both. These were introduced gradually in those Ages when Darknes had overspread the Church; and by two Means more especially are the Papists to this Day supporting their Babel; the first is *Ignorance*; to this End they take away the Key of Knowledge from the Laity; they discourage their acquainting themselves with divine Things, the Consequence of which would be, they would see the Bonds of Error by which they were captivated, and attempt to burst them; they must therefore be kept in the Dark, and leave the Priest to judge for them, and he engages to lead

* James iii. 15.

them

them right ; but what shall we say when *the Blind* (or the cunning Sophister) *lead the Blind* ?—But some *will see* ; they assert the Prerogative of human Nature to *judge for themselves*, and dare to obey Christ, who has said, “ *search the Scripture ;* ” “ *prove all Things.* ” Such shall be intimidated with all Manner of *Cruelty* to be exercised upon them. Nor have their Threats been Wind and Words only ; *their Fires* have been more dreadful than those of *Rome Pagan*. O the destructive Wars carried on in the Southern Parts of *France* against the *Albigenses* and *Walgenses* under the Conduct of the Pope’s Legates and Generals employed by them ! What Trophies of Inhumanity did they win ! wherever they came they might be traced by their Footsteps of Blood. *Crusades* were published (such as had before been sent forth in what they called the Holy War against the *Saracens* for the Recovery of the Holy Land) with the Promise of Remission of Sin ; this brought together a hundred thousand Men and more ; and, being taught that if they fell in Battle they would certainly go to Paradise, they rushed upon the Sword, push’d on by enthusiastick Bigotry ; they insulted Nature’s primeval Law, and rather courted Death than shunned it. The Consequence was, the Country was made an *Aceldama* ; Cities became Heaps, the Fields were turned into Deserts, Princes were disinherited,

disinherited, Nobles sacrificed, and their ancient and honourable Families became extinct. Who can read the Accounts of the Massacres at *Paris* and in *Ireland*, and not blush to think that such Cruelties could be exercised by Beings designed to be rational? Who can but wonder with extreme Horror, that the more sedate and (if possible) more exquisite Barbarities of the Inquisition could ever enter, much more be indulged in, a human Heart? Amazing! that the Tenderneſs of the *Female Sex*, the Nonage of the *young*, the *blind*, the *lame*, the *Gentleman*, the *Scholar*, the *Divine*, must fall an undistinguished Sacrifice to the *Molochs* of the *Romish Church*? Are these the Followers of that Jesus who reproved his Disciples for even thinking to call down Fire from Heaven to consume those that affronted him in Person? Did he not declare that he came not to destroy Men's Lives, but to save them? Do a *Gardiner* and *Bonner* appear to be the Followers of the *meek* and *tender-hearted* Jesus? Do they act like *his Vicegerents*, when committing the most shocking Barbarities, which unbiass'd Nature can't think of without shuddering? Wretched Butchers! first to destroy the Sheep of Christ, and then declare they did it out of Zeal for the Shepherd! nay, hypocritically assure them it was for their Soul's Good! but *Lies* and *Cruelty* are too well match'd; and surely

none

none but those who are of their Father the Devil, in point of Cruelty and Murther, could resemble him with such a diabolical Exactness as the Father of Lies.

MISS MOLLY.

I HAVE read, Sir, such Accounts as these with a Mixture of *Delight* and *Trouble*: For while I have admired the Grace of God so conspicuous in the steady Sufferers, Nature has started back at this painful Thought, What if I were called to pass through such Scenes of Sufferings! I have paused upon Christ's Words, *If any Man draws back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him* *; again, *He that is ashamed of me and of my Words in this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he comes in the Glory of his Father with his holy Angels* †.

FATHER.

IN this, my Dear, you but succeed to a Care which has distressed many before you. But if all that take upon them the Profession of Christianity, would do it with Solemnity, would sit down and count the Cost, they must know that that Jesus, whom every Christian adores, is infinitely worthy their most choice Affections;

* Heb. x. 38.

† Mark viii. 38.

there-

therefore every Christian, when he really commences such, renounceth all in Comparison of Christ, with full Purpose of Heart to cleave to him continually; and leaves it to his Lord to lead him whither he pleases, determined by his Grace to follow him, even though to a Prison, a Gibbet, or a Stake. Let Christians then in prosperous Circumstances recollect that they have no absolute Promise to *save any thing but their Souls*. Christ hath not engaged to any that they should never have their Bodies, Estates, and Reputations shipwreck'd. If we close with him with a secret Proviso, we are not genuine Disciples; but if we are absolute, entire, and in good Earnest in covenanting with him, those who are united by a living Faith to the blessed Redeemer, shall never be separated from him. His real Sheep that know, that hear, and love his Voice, and follow him, shall be the constant Objects of his pastoral Care; he promises, *None shall pluck them out of my Hand*. His Power can easily preserve them; as a faithful Trustee he is engaged to do it, and as a Part of his mystical Body which he loves, he is under a sweet Constraint in this Case; for *having loved his own which are in the World, he loves them to the End*. Therefore he will not leave them nor forsake them. They pray and he introduces. Yea, the Father's Love and Power, the Son's Advocateship, which

is

is never employ'd in vain, and many Promises which engage that the *Lord will keep the Feet of his Saints*, are a solid Basis for their Hope and Joy in every Hour of Danger. He who says, *my Grace is sufficient for thee*, knows our Wants, and will proportion the Supply of his Spirit. And it adds greatly to the Encouragement of sincere but weak hearted Christians, that so many as tender and timorous as themselves, have been animated with undaunted Courage in a Time of Persecution. *As Afflictions have abounded*, so also *have their Consolations*. Under the Confinement of a Prison their Souls have been more than ever enlarged. While their Feet have been fast in the Stocks, their Souls have been upon the Wing; and while some have mourned over them, and by sympathetick Sorrows been their Fellow-sufferers, they have sang Praises. Mr. *Jos. Allen*, in his Letters from *Ilchester*, bears his Testimony to this for himself and his Fellow-prisoners. It was no uncommon Observation made at that Time by Christians, that they never saw so much of Heaven as within the Prison-walls; the holy Conversation, the cheerful Smiles, the enlarged Praises, the mutual Love, the lively Prayers, were peculiarly affecting and attractive. There was a celestial, sacred Shine upon each other's Countenances. Yea, some have been loth to come out of their Prison,

fearing

fearing they should be debarred the Enjoyment of their Prison-cordials; and others have told their Friends, that they should never fear a Prison more, since they had so much of the presence of their heavenly Father there. Could we consult them, they would assure us, that they never so possessed all Things in God as when they had nothing. *They took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods*, when by the Witness of the Spirit they *knew in themselves that they had in Heaven a better and a more enduring Substance.*

How many, though unlearned, did boldly dispute for the Truths of Christ against the Bishops and Doctors, setting their Faces like a Flint? How steadily did they persevere, when Imprisonments were long and tedious to Nature? Though Enemies were cruel and unrelenting, though Offers were made to some to relax their Constancy and to melt them into a Compliance, if a few of them did slide, they were but a few that were at all moved from their Stedfastness; and they who drove back a little, how soon were they enabled to recover themselves and grow more resolute for their former wavering; witness *Granmer*, who held his Right Hand so steadily in the Flames to burn first, and called it his *unworthy Right Hand*, because it had subscribed his Recantation. Some were even roasted in the Fire, and yet were kept steady to the

End. Thus *Ridley* comforted himself and *Latimer*, that God would either abate the fury of the Fire or strengthen them peculiarly to bear it. To which *Latimer's* responsive Faith replied, "God is faithful who will not suffer us to be tried above what we are able," &c. Yea, did not some cry "sweet Jesus!" in the midst of the Flames? Did not one say, that 'he felt no more Pain in the Fire than if he were in a Bed of Roses?' On the Whole then, are not the general Promises of God made to Christians, illustrated and sealed by so many remarkable Fulfilments of them to his People in Seasons of Distress, abundant Encouragements? Let but our Hearts be dead to the World, and mortified to the Delights of the Flesh; let us but live much above, conversing with Jesus, prizing him, loving him, and living to him, and we shall not then count our Lives dear to us that we may finish our Course with Joy.

BUT to heighten and enliven these Remarks, let me remind you of the three Worthies, whom you read of in *Daniel*, and their heroic Conduct, when in the Views not only of Fire but of a fiery Furnace, and that too heated to seven Degrees more than before (and I do it with the greatest Satisfaction, as they were young Persons, perhaps coeval with some of you). How stern,
how

how rueful the Countenance of the Babylonish Tyrant, when they were summoned before him? And the more so, as he was not accusom'd to have any of his Commands disputed! how resolute and firm his Resolve! not an Hour's Reprieve shall be granted, if they still stand out!—O! the daring, contemptuous, presumptuous Air, with which he cries out “*and why is that God that shall deliver out of my Hand?*” Haughty insolent Worm! but if his Insolence amazes you, not less, I hope, the firmness of these young Men charms you! *he* is all storm, *they* a pacifick Sea! *he* lashes the Shores with his Billows, his boisterous Passions, *they* are immoveable as a Rock! unparalleled Magnanimity! We don't find, indeed, that they vainly courted Martyrdom, nor threw themselves into the Flames; they did not insult the King with the Title of Tyrant, tho' it would have been too suitable an Epithet, but answer him with a holy Unconcern, *O Nebushadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this Matter*, or (as it may be rendered) *we want not an Answer for thee in this Matter*; “we need not deliberate, we dare not
 “parley, or even imagine that we may upon
 “any Terms comply with thee; we are well satisfied that *Jehovah* our God is able to deliver
 “us from all thy rage, and he will deliver;
 “but, let the Will of God be done, whether

“ to rescue us or not, we are determined to go
 “ by the Rule of his Word, and are not ashamed
 “ or afraid to tell thee before this assembled
 “ Throng, that we will not comply.” Upon
 the Whole, I think no History ever gave account of any thing more heroic than this. Sure these are some of the noblest Champions that ever shone in sacred Arms on the Field of Battle ! and do we wonder at their coming out safe unsinged from the fiery Furnace ! Is it a Miracle in our Eye not to have the Smell of Fire upon them, when they have past thro’ its Vehemence ? And is it not as great a one to see the power of divine Grace magnified in their resolute Behaviour ? *Young Men !* and yet so established ! *Courtiers !* and yet so resolute to oppose Royalty so daringly abused ! in the Court of *Babylon !* where all were obsequious Adorers ! had they received so many Favours from their Prince and might they hope to receive more, and yet refuse to comply ! O triumphant Grace ! surely it is sufficient *for us* too ; and under the Influences of it *we* may be made more than Conquerors !

MISS MOLLY.

THIS has been instructive and edifying indeed ! nor can I regret the Force I put upon myself, when I proposed my Difficulty ; since it hath given occasion to a Discourse so supporting

ing to my feeble, so animating to my dastardly Spirits. For that Grace which is sufficient I would always seek; in the Strength of this Grace I would always walk; putting myself a helpless Sheep into the Arms of the great, the able, the tender-hearted Shepherd. Have others in Weakness been made strong? Have they found their Strength increase, as their Troubles have? Hath the Lord *with the Upright shewn himself upright?* And hath he *saved his afflicted People?* Have the *Feeble been as David* in a Season of Danger? I trust I shall find it so too! "*the word of the Lord is tried; he is a Buckler to all those that put their Trust in him.*" I would now say with a humble Triumph "*Who is a God save the Lord? And who is a Rock save our God? It is the Lord that girdeth me with Strength.*" *His Right Hand will hold me up, and his Gentleness will make me great *.*"

I HAD intended farther to have proposed a difficult Text of Scripture, which has a Reference to the Subject we are upon; but as this might protract the Time beyond the present Convenience of the Family, I choose to defer it; acknowledging with all Gratitude the Indulgence which has been shewn me.

* Psal. xviii. 25, &c.



The Fourth Dialogue.

FATHER.

YOU have all shewn much Readiness to this Scheme of social Converse, and now I see you meet the Motion with a Smile whilst I call you together again, the Affairs of the Family giving us a leisure Hour. Lay aside then all that Reserve which would obstruct the End of our Meeting. Let Freedom possess every Breast, and reign upon every Tongue, whilst Wisdom guards every Ear from Prejudice and Misconstruction.

MR. THOMAS.

As no doubt the greatest Body of Fire which we are acquainted with, is the Sun, I should be glad to be informed of its Nature, its Distance from us, and the Influence it hath upon our World. I do not expect to have these Things entirely unfolded; or if they were, possibly I should not be able to receive them. But perhaps I might through your Explanation, Sir, get
some

some additional Light from it to my Mind, and some Warmth to my Heart, as I would be led from every fresh View of its beaming Splendour and important Uses to pay a more intimate Veneration to its Creator. But here I beg you would condescend to use the plainest Language. You will please to remember that you are not talking to profound Scholars, but to your own Family. In these Things we are, at least some of us, Babes in point of Understanding. Lisp to us as such. The more we understand you, the more we shall admire your Wisdom; if you can, out of the Stores of your learned Mind, draw forth to enrich ours.

FATHER.

It would be a Pleasure to me to improve you in any thing valuable. But you have put me upon an Undertaking of no small Difficulty. The *Sun* hath been reckoned commonly among the *Planets*; but, according to the new Philosophy, should be numbered among the *fix'd Stars*, for such certainly it is. Anciently it was imagined it moved round the Earth (and our Forms of Speech are now taken from that Supposition) but that it is fixed, and that the *Earth* and other Planets move round it, is no longer Matter of *Hypothesis* or Uncertainty, but demonstratively evident. Not but the Sun has a Motion round

its own *Axis*; and as Astronomers have discovered Spots in its Disk or Body, and as those in the Margin change their Place, and after some Time are seen in the opposite Edge, and then return to their first Place, and all this in about 27 Days, they conclude the Period of its Rotation round its own *Axis* to be so long; and this Motion is from East to West.

As to the Magnitude of the Sun, if its Diameter is 152 Diameters of the Earth, and that of the Earth 7967 Statute Miles, it must amount to upward of nine hundred thousand Miles; a prodigious Body indeed! and if it is a Globe, whether Sphere or Spheroid, its Circumference must be three Times as much. What its Nature is, can be only guess'd at; perhaps it may be a fluid Body, not utterly unlike an Ocean of melted Glass; but how it is supported, fed, and kept burning; how it can emit such Quantities of Rays to beget Light and Heat, and yet not be exhausted, yea, as far as we know of, not impoverished or diminished, we must leave; here the Sun itself leaves us in the Dark; it has an impenetrable Veil cast around it; but we are led by it to adore him the more humbly who hath made it by his great Power, infused into it its amazing Influence, and makes it his Instrument

of dispensing such important Favours to us and the farthest Part of its extended System.

THE Distance of the Sun from our Earth is judged to be 81 Millions of Miles; so Mr. *Whiston* calculates it. A Distance which, we find by Experience, wonderfully answers its Use and Offices. Some Planets are much nearer; was our Earth in their Place, it must be burnt up to a Cinder; others are at such a Distance, that was the Earth there, it would be constantly bound up in icy Fetters and enveloped in solitary tremendous Darkeness, so as to be absolutely useless and uninhabitable; and yet the amazing Wisdom of the Most High, we have Reason to believe, has fitted them for Inhabitation, either their Contexture or their Atmosphere being different, or their Inhabitants being of a different Make to bear the Extremity of Cold or Heat*.

How wondrous is the Sun in its Influences upon our Globe? Under these we view the Earth, moistened through the wintry Months with Rains, in the Spring producing Grass spontaneously for the Food of Beasts, and Herbs for the Use of Man. When its warm Beams cherish our Gardens, the variously beautiful Flowers adorn their Beds and Borders. The Sun with

* See *Isaiah*, xlv. 18. *Heb.* i. 2.

its gentle Voice summons the new-sown seeds to make their Appearance, and afterwards trains them up to Perfection. If we take our more extended Walks in the Fields, and view the Corn no higher than the Clods of the Furrow all the Winter, we find upon a warmer Ray communicated from the Sun, it advances in Height, it grows strong, it is bearded with the precious Grain, it ripens, and when it has imbibed still more of the solar Beams, it is fitted for the Reaper's Sickle and to strengthen Man's Heart. When the Sun makes its more intimate and friendly Approach, our Bodies, shivering and almost shrunk with wintry Cold, expand themselves in Vigor and Sprightliness. Perspiration grows more free ; we breathe, we work, we travel more cheerfully under its gentle Wings. It is not till the Sun with a richer Benevolence dispenses its Beams, that the *Vine*, the *Apple-tree*, or *Plumb-tree* shoot forth, or so much as promise us future Fruit ; and in Proportion as the Sun proceeds, the Conception, the Birth, the Education, and Perfection of their respective Fruits are promoted and secured. If Clouds intercept the Rays of the Sun more than usual thro' the Summer Months, how feeble are the Progresses of Nature ? How slowly do the Fruit ripen, and how raw their Juices ? But this is not all.

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THE Sun shoots its prolific Beams into the Bowels of the Earth ! there it generates *Metals* in their respective Beds ; whether coarser ones in the northern Parts of our Globe, where its Rays are more oblique, or the finer Sort in those Countries where it shines with more direct and unabated Power. The very *Diamond*, the *Topaz*, the *Saphire*, and *Emerald* in their rocky Recesses owe their Lustre to the Sun, as well as to the peculiar soil in which they grow.

By the Sun chiefly the Waters of the great Deep, the lesser Rivers and stagnating Fluids are so exhaled, as to form Clouds. The first action of the Sun may be the attracting exceeding small Particles of the Water, which being lighter than the Air, mount up with it, as all Fluids when in another Fluid, specifically heavier than itself, will. When in mounting they reach such a Region of the Atmosphere as is of the same specific Gravity with themselves, they are suspended. There they join other Particles of the same Nature and equal Heaviness. Before they were too rare or fine, to be visible ; now they become more opaque, they reflect the Sun's Beams, and become visible. Now they are wafted here and there by the Wind ; sometimes they are dash'd one against another, and at other times they grow so heavy by the Acquisition of other Particles, that they descend

descend in smaller Rains or heavier Showers. But the Sun hath a Power not only of attracting Particles which are purely watry, but innumerable Bodies of a subtle Nature besides, as Sulphureous, Nitrous, Saline, &c. When these float in the Air under the Action of the Sun's vast Heat, they may, as Bodies in the Furnace of a Chymist, undergo great Changes, Sublimations, Separations, and Compositions; and no Wonder that the Consequences are such awful Explosions as Thunders and Lightnings, Balls of Fire bursting, &c. and well is it for our World that all these are under the Eye and Restraint of the Almighty and propitious Governor of all Things.

MR. THOMAS.

I THANK you, Sir, for this instructive Lecture on the Sun. While no Eye that beholds it can acquaint itself with all (perhaps not a thousandth Part of its Wonders) how many are there that partake of its Light and Warmth, and yet know no more of it than the Beast which drinks of the Stream concerns itself whence it springs and whither it flows? Let it awake the ardent Praise of every Child in this House, that Providence hath cast our Lot under a Father that is capable and willing to instruct us. My Mind is enlarged with this View; my Heart bows with Reverence to him *who speaketh to the Sun*

Sun and it shineth not, and at his Pleasure scaleth up the Stars. My Breast glows with Love and Gratitude to him who hath filled this mighty Orb with all its Beams and Blessings for my Use, and that I am continually imbibing, as at every Pore, its vital Rays. I do not so much wonder that the poor Heathens, who were ignorant of the true God, paid an idolatrous Respect to the Sun. As they knew not him who is the Fountain of all Existence, and as in Consequence hereof they terminated their Worship in the Creature, I can't be surprized that they fixed upon this grand Luminary. Or, if they wanted an Emblem of the divine Power, Splendor, Benignity, and Constancy, by which to present their Service, where would they find, in all the material Creation, such a Representation of Divinity? I should be glad if either you, Sir, or my Eldest Brother, would lead me a little into an Acquaintance with that important, melancholly Affair, if Antiquity leaves us any considerable Traces of the Worship of the Sun.

FATHER.

I SHOULD be pleased to have your Brother comply with your Desire. But don't expect more Clearness and Accuracy than the Nature of the Thing will admit of. The Ancients speak of these Things very obscurely. Sometimes the Sun

is treated as a God, sometimes as a Representative of the Deity. Perhaps at first their Priests and Prophets might choose to deliver themselves in the cloudy Way, to keep People in Surprise and in a Way of Dependence on them for farther Instruction. They committed nothing to writing for a long Season; this occasioned Mistakes, and Errors spread themselves in abundance; they spread a Veil of Metaphors over all, which perhaps was taken for real Truth by the common People. And the Devil through the divine Permission, threw all into Darkness, and bewildered them in inextricable Labyrinths.

ELDEST SON.

WHAT you have said, Sir, added to what I have read myself upon this Head, might seal up my Lips, and be a fair Apology for my Silence. But should you and my dear Brother insist upon my speaking, that will be as fair an Apology for my unavoidable Inaccuracies.

WHEN the Nations corrupted themselves, and left off to acknowledge the only true God, the Worship of the *Sun* was soon embraced. The *Chaldeans*, in some of the first Ages after the Flood, debased themselves with this Sort of Divinity, as appears by Asiatick Monuments mentioned by *Maimonides*. While they adored the
Host

Host of Heaven, either as independent Deities; or the Residences of Divinity, they called the Sun (*μὲν Οὐρανὸς θεὸν*) the supreme God of the Heavens, and imagined that the other heavenly Bodies obeyed his imperial Nod. They called him (*Agens Maximum*) the great Operator, the generative Principle of all Things, and therefore said *there was none like him*; and this is supposed to be the Rise of that cruel Species of idolatrous Worship, when they caused their Sons and their Daughters to pass through the Fire to *Moloch*, as supposing the Sun to rule over the Element of Fire. Among the *Phœnicians* he seems to be worshiped under the Name of *Hercules* (*אור-כר* *Urcol*, i. e. *Illustrator Omnium*). The Family of *Abraham* seem to be infected with this Species of Idolatry, and probably the very Place where they dwelt was noted for it and dedicated to it, as it was called by the Name *Ur of the Chaldees*, which is the *Hebrew* Word by which the *Sun* was known. From his Family and Country therefore he is called away, as God would preserve the Worship of himself inviolate in his Family. From the *Chaldeans*, the Original of Nations very much after the Flood, the Worship of the *Sun* spread. In *Egypt* a City was called by its Name, probably dedicated to its Honour*, a chief Seat of Idolatry, being a City of Priests,

* *Isaiah*, xix. 18. the City of *Heres* of the *Sun* in the Margin.

as *Strabo* writes; by the *Greeks* it was called *Heliopolis*, which equally signifies the *City of the Sun*. But the *Persians* were the most noted and assiduous Worshipers of the *Sun*. They watched for his Rising, and paid him Homage at his first appearing as a Sovereign coming out of his Bed-chamber. But as they could not always have him with them, they made *Fire* upon his Altar his *Representative*; this they kindled from his Beams, and ever kept burning. Before this sacred Fire they offered their publick Devotions; and when they were obliged to worship in their own Houses, they did it *before the Fire*. At length rose up *Zoroastres*, a great Philosopher and pretended Prophet among these People. In order to give his Injunctions the greater Sanction, he affirmed that he was caught up into Heaven, and that though he could not see God, he heard him speak out of the Midst of a great and most bright Flame of Fire. Probably he took this from *Moses's* hearing the Lord speak out of the Midst of a flaming Bush, and from *Israel's* hearing him speak from the Midst of Fire at Mount *Sinai*. Hereupon he taught his Followers that Fire was the truest *Shechinah* or Token of divine Presence; that the Sun being the most perfect Fire, God had *there* the Throne of his Glory, and a Residence in a more excellent Manner than any where else, and next to that

in

in the *elementary Fire* with us. He ordered them therefore to direct their Worship to God towards the *Sun* (whom he called *Mithra*) and next, to their sacred Fires; and when they approached those Fires, they came on the *West Side*, that, having their Faces towards them and the rising Sun at the same Time, they might direct their Worship towards both. The perverse *Jews*, as they were unaccountably prone to all the Idolatries that came in their way fell in with this in *Ezekiel's Time* *, where twenty-five Men are seen with their Backs towards the Temple of the Lord, and their Faces towards the East, and they worshipped the Sun towards the East. Yea, and before that Prophet's Time the Kings of *Judah* had given Horses to the Sun, which *Josiah* took away, and burnt the Chariots of the Sun with Fire †. I must observe also, that this idolatrous Worship of the Sun passed among other Things to the *Greeks* and *Romans*. Learned Men give us an Account of Altars they erected to his Honour, and that too under his eastern Name. One runs thus, "*Omnipotenti Deo Mithrae Ap-*"
 "*pius Claudius, &c.*" Another, "*Domino Soli*"
 "*Claudius, &c.*" Another, "*Soli Sanctissimo*"
 "*Sacrum Claudius et Claudia, &c.*" Another
 "*Deo Soli Inviato Mithrae Septimus Zosimus,*"
 "*&c.*" Once more, *Julius Caesar* inscribes an

* Chap. viii. 16.

† 2 Kings, xxiii. 5, 11.

Altar thus, "*Soli Inviolæ Mithræ.*" I have only to add, that this Idolatry continues to this Day in *Japan*, in the Isles of the *East-Indies*, in *America* among the Natives, and in *Africa*; but I fear I shall be censured both for Prolivity and Obscurity, though I have industriously avoided both, whilst I have been giving you what I have collected from *Selden* and his Commentator *Byrner*, with *Dr. Prideaux*.

FATHER.

I AM glad, my Son, you have spent your Time so well, and dived so far into this important Point of antique Learning, which every Scholar at least should be acquainted with. I know there is a great Veil of Darkness upon these Things; nor is it easy to remove the Rubbish so far as to find out Truth. However, as it is too evident to be denied, that all flesh had corrupted its way, it may lead us to a melancholy Reflection upon the State of human Nature, if left to itself. We grope in the Dark. It is certain we need an express Revelation who God is, and how we are to approach and worship him; for without it where is the Nation that hath not wandered into endless and perplexing Mazes? Though in common Things wise, though in Commerce, Politicks, and Philosophy sagacious, yet here they were Fools, yea, many

Times guilty of the most sottish Folly. Polite in their Manners towards each other, but base and sordid in their Conceptions of the Deity. Thus the Apostle, who knew them so well by travelling among them, and conversing with their Writings, testifies, *Professing themselves to be wise they became Fools; were vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Hearts were darkned; they changed the Truth of God into a Lie, and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator* *. The Infidels of the present Age little think what they are doing, while they would degrade the sacred Oracles; nor do they consider into what Darkness they are endeavouring to plunge the World. For without such a standing Revelation concerning the Nature and Perfections of God, and how he is to be approached, how do Men trifle at one Time, how basely act at another? Even the greatest Philosophers that could soar at one Time, could shamefully grovel at another! For the most Part they went with the Throng, while they were more or less convinced of the Vanity of their Superstitions. But alas! they were nonplust, bewilder'd, confus'd! they wanted one to lead them by the Hand. But blessed be God the Womb of Nature has given us Birth in a Land of heavenly Light! how satisfactory is our Revelation to

* Romans i. 21, 22, 25.

every serious, inquisitive Mind? How worthy the Purity and Perfection of the Divine Being? How conducive to his Honour and our Safety and Peace, while we have such a Mediator as our *Immanuel* is? While we are called upon to be entirely devoted in every thing to the Most High, and are to be following on in that Path which leads to the Perfection of our Natures, and a compleat and everlasting Blessedness in the Enjoyment of God. In a Word, nothing can be conceived of as tending more to the Glory of our Creator, and our Safety and Peace, Perfection and Felicity.

I WOULD, my dear Children, take every Opportunity to enhance your Esteem for this sacred Volume, for you cannot sufficiently prize it. It is the Royal Charter by which you are entitled to and enjoy your temporal and spiritual Privileges, and this too under the Great Seal of Heaven; and shall you not value *that*, without which you are no better than Out-casts, Aliens, and Foreigners? It is the Prescription of the heavenly Physician, how you may have your Diseases healed which otherwise would be fatal; and should not the Life and Health of your Souls be esteemed at a higher Rate than that of the Body? Again, it is a Light set up to the Traveller, while entangling and wounding Briers and Thorns

Thorns are on one Hand, and Bogs and Quick-sands on the other, and Rocks and Precipices before him ; and should not a Person in such Circumstances look with Pleasure and Thankfulness to a *Lamp*, to a *rising Moon*, to an Hemisphere full of *Stars*, but much more to a *rising Sun* ? I charge you let not this Book lie by neglected. Be deaf to the poisonous Suggestions of those who speak lightly of it. Read it more diligently, and form all your Conceptions of God and divine Things from what you meet with there. Adore and worship him in the way there prescribed. If you deviate into your own Fancies or other Mens Inventions, there is no End of *Error* ; it eats as does a Canker. One produces another ; nor know we how far we shall wander. I am reminding you now not only what may be, but what hath been and still is the Case. There is not an Age, not a Nation, under the Superstitions of Popery and Paganism, but is a glaring Instance of what I am speaking of. I say then again, bless God for the Bible, and use it to the Purposes for which it was designed. Adhere to and revere its simple Dictates ; think that God knows best himself how he ought to be worshipped. Let every Part of this Word be read most impartially, and interpreted not by former prejudicate Notions, but as much as may be *by itself*. Choose rather to be

called a *Fool* by the confident and vain, the proud and self-conceited, for your Subjection to Revelation, than to aim at Reputation for Wisdom by daring to make God's Wisdom bow to yours. Only be well satisfied that you understand the Word aright, that you do not take Darkness for Light, or Light for Darkness; then be firm as a Rock against the insolent Sneers and vain Reasonings of benighted Deists.

I THINK I cannot dismiss you in a more proper Manner, than by engaging you to dwell upon this Subject with Prayer, with repeated Supplications to Him who is the Fountain of all Wisdom, that the great Things contained in that Book may be revealed in you, and your whole Souls cast into it, as into a Mold, and that you may in all your Behaviour hold forth the Word of Life.



The Fifth Dialogue.

SECOND DAUGHTER.

AFTER this very long Silence, what Reflection shall I make? Is it because the Subject is exhausted? That can't be! Or is it that the Company, Sir, consisting of your Children only, have been waiting your Leisure? They have always found your Tongue as the *Tongue of the Just*, even *choices Silver*; they have been enriched by this Silver, and blest from your Lips. But as you, Sir, have not begun yourself, I am inclined to think that you are waiting to hear us propose our Difficulties (if any such occur) that you may adapt your Discourse to our Cases. Upon this Apprehension, excuse me if I now propose a Difficulty which has lain upon me almost ever since this Conversation began. How shall we understand that Place, *Thou shalt heap Coals of Fire on his Head**. The Expression seems to sound harsh, as a Matter of

/ * Romans, xii. 20.

Permission, and much more as a Plea by which to strengthen the Apostle's Argument in that Place.

FATHER.

As I love to have you inquisitive, especially after divine Knowledge, so I would encourage this Temper to a proper Degree. Let none therefore of my dear Children indulge that Shyness which is the Nurse of Ignorance. The Apostle is here exhorting to Gentleness and brotherly Love, and to suppress unbecoming Resentments. Degenerate Souls are wont to breathe Revenge upon Injuries received. The great Apostacy opened a dreadful Flood-gate for this, and set all the violent and outrageous Passions on float. From that dire Hour Enmity and Rage, Malice, Envy, Revenge, and all the Spawn of the old Serpent, took place in the wicked Heart of *Adam* and his ruined Posterity. But *Christ* the second *Adam* by his Death purchased, by his Example recommends, and by his Gospel inculcates the opposite Dispositions, *viz.* Love and its genuine Fruits, Peace and Harmony, mutual, fraternal Forbearance, Gentleness and Kindness in every Shape, that the Church below might be an Emblem of Heaven; and here from *Solomon's* Words*, the Apostle directs to that Conduct which

* Proverbs, xxv. 21 and 22.

would

would perform its sacred Wonders on an Adversary. He supposes that the Man that hath done us the Injury is in Distress, that we are able to relieve him, and that he lies at our Mercy. What shall we do in this Case? Corrupt Nature says, " Let him alone ! What have you to do with him ? He is neither Friend nor Brother ! Certain it is that he would neglect thee in similar Circumstances, or perhaps do worse. Therefore, either take Advantage and distress him more, insult him thoroughly, make him to feel the Sting of Revenge, or, at least, take no Concern about him." " No, says the Wisdom from above, by all Means relieve him ; nay, though to do it be expensive, even if he hunger, *feed* him." Blind Nature will reply, " This is the way to confirm him in his Wickedness, and to encourage him to distress the Innocent." No ! it is to be hoped the very contrary may be the Effect ; you will *heap Coals of Fire on him* to melt him into a Temper of Kindness and Friendship. You remember (my Dear) that I was once pointing out to you the Method which the Goldsmith takes when melting his precious Metal : when he has put it into his Crucible, and buried it deep in the Fire, he puts a Tile upon the Mouth of the Pot, and then heaps his Charcoal over it. Hence, methinks, the Metaphor is taken. Would you choose

choose then to make the Man your Friend rather than destroy him as your Enemy? And who would not? Would you take the most forcible Method to produce ingenuous Shame and real Relentings, try this Method of Love.—Boisterous Spirits have been thus calmed; and, while Violence returned hath made way for greater Hostility than before, and produced vexatious Law-suits, or personal Revenge, Blood and Murther, a Gentleness of Disposition, an Oblivion of Injuries, and embracing Opportunities to return Good for Evil, have sometimes bound the Person to you in the Cords of the most cordial Friendship. I am sensible Men of great Name take the Expression in a different Sense; but this seems to be most agreeable to the Scope of the Apostle, especially as he adds, “*Be not overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good.*” And indeed, my Children, for I speak to you all, as I always endeavoured to educate you to mutual Tenderness, so I have done all I could to repress and keep entirely down all outrageous Passions; and O that I might do it effectually and for ever! For alas some of these imperious Passions turn Men into *Brutes*, by prompting them to bite and devour one another; and others into a sort of *Devils*, for what is more their Picture than Malice, Envy, Revenge, and Murder? Learn then, my dear Hopes and Fears,

learn

learn to draw forth your Souls, as the tender Mother her Breast, to the Hungry, even though it be to an hungry Enemy. Use him not churlishly, but tenderly. Relieve him with Gentleness and real Kindness ! for the Word which the Apostle uses (*ψωμιζς*) signifies more than a bare Feeding, viz. doing it with *Humanity* and *Indulgence* (*per-humaniter et indulgenter pascere. Pereir.*) or feed him Piece by Piece, as we cut the Food for the Child, or feed a sick Person that cannot help himself. Such a one you have often heard Archbishop *Granmer* was. And many Instances we have in foreign Histories and our own of the good Effects of returning Good for Evil. *Plutarch*, in the Life of *Lycurgus*, tells us of one *Alcander*, a young Man that followed that wise Lawgiver with a spiteful Design, and gave him a severe Blow in the Face, which much indangered one of his Eyes ; but he spoke kindly to him, took him into his House, entertained him with good Temper, and thus won him to the Love of himself and Virtue too. The Account which we have of the eminently religious Bishop *Leighton* informs us, that at *Edinburgh* he was insulted by the Mob in the Streets, so that it was with Difficulty and Danger that he reached his Palace, as they were ready to pluck his Gown off his Back ; but instead of returning Railing for Railing, he spoke kindly to them, opened his Doors, invited

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invited

invited them in, called upon his Steward to set before them the best Provision the House afforded, and, having entertained them hospitably, dismissed them. The Effect was, that the Populace was melted with these Coals of Fire, so that they went away, crying him up wonderfully, though he was a Lord-Bishop. Once more, one of our Divines tells us of a Judge that had justly condemned a Malefactor; the poor Wretch, being a Gentleman, resented his Behaviour, and instead of relenting into Repentance, stormed at the Judge, and called him opprobrious Names. The Judge bore all meekly, and reprieved him. When brought before him a second time, the Judge gently asked him, whether his Choler was boiled over and spent? Which he soon convinced him was not, by repeating the same injurious Language. He reprieved him unask'd a second Time; but before that Time was expired, he sent for him to his Chamber in *London*, and asked him whether his Anger was pacified? Still nothing came from him but Bitterness and Outrage. Whereupon the Judge cry'd out, God forgive thee, I do; and withal threw him his Pardon. The guilty Wretch was so astonish'd at this Conduct that he fell into a Swoon; and when recovered, he refused the Pardon, unless the Judge would pardon his Malice, and receive him into his Service.

He

He did so, and he served him with peculiar Faithfulness, so that at his Death the Judge left him the greatest Part of his Substance. Upon the View of these Things, I cannot repress the Wish that you and others would but take this Method in order to make Friends. A warm and genial Sun may relax a stiff Temper, while a rough North Wind will but more condense it. If you attempt to break a Flint upon an Anvil, it will rather fly in your Face; but put it on a soft Pillow and your End may be answered. Or suppose after all the Man persists in his Folly inflexibly perverse, the Lord, who sees you, will approve and graciously reward your Tenderness towards him. He may do it now, by giving you a sweet, peaceful Consciousness of Soul that you denied yourself even for an Enemy's Good, that it was your Aim to *learn Christ*, to behave as his Disciple, and to conform to the Rule of his sacred Gospel; and how far, or which way he will reward such a Temper and Carriage openly hereafter, the last Day must testify. But oh! what Self-reproaches and Curses must fall to his Share in that Day, who would not know the Way of Peace, though led into it by the gentle Hand of an injured Neighbour? Those Coals of Fire which could not melt down a Temper so virulent, so disingenuous, will be turned into the burning Coals of the Fire of God's

God's Wrath! Awful thought to such who are unrelenting.

MR. THOMAS.

SIR, by your Silence, I suppose you have finished what you designed to entertain us with upon this Head; and the longer we attend to your Lectures, the deeper is my Sense of your paternal Goodness. It was a happy Scheme that offered itself to your Thoughts, and I wish that every Parent according to his Ability would take some such Method to feed his Offspring with intellectual Bread sweetned with Honey. But as others have proposed their Difficulties, I would mention one Scripture upon this Head, on which I have employed some Thoughts, but beg your better ones, viz. *Other Foundation can no Man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any Man build upon this Foundation Gold, Silver, precious Stones, Wood, Hay, Stubble, every Man's Work shall be made manifest; for the Day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by Fire, and the Fire shall try every Man's Work, of what sort it is. If any Man's Work abide which he hath built thereon, he shall receive a Reward; if any Man's Work shall be burnt, he shall suffer Loss, but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by Fire*.*

* 1 Cor. ii. 11, &c.

FATHER.

THIS is an important Place of Scripture, which I would the rather take some Pains in clearing, as the *Papists* have abused it to support their gainful Doctrine of *Purgatory*. It is not said that the *Persons* of Christians will be tried by it, but their Doctrines and Practices; nor is it said that even these will be purged by Fire, but discovered by it. And indeed the *Papists* must be much at a Loss for Argument to make use of this Scripture to support that Doctrine. The Apostle is here comparing Christianity to a *Building*, as in other Places. The *Foundation* laid is Jesus Christ. The believing him to be what the Gospel declares, and an accepting of him in good Earnest under such Characters in which he is exhibited and tender'd in the Gospel, is indeed laying the Foundation of this Building in us. In this we may suppose all are agreed. But how wide the Difference afterwards? Some upon this Foundation erect a Superstructure agreeable to the Foundation, Gold, Silver, precious Stones; that is, the Person, if a Minister, preaches the solid Graces and sacred Duties of Christianity, Holiness of Heart, Affection to God and Man, Subjection to the Authority of Christ, and, which immediately follows, an evangelical, ready Obedience; a serious Chearfulness of Heart, Usefulness of Life, Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the
Holy

Holy Ghost. Again, if a private Christian hath laid the Foundation on Christ by a living Faith, and his Temper and Conversation is agreeable, strict and holy, meek and humble, useful and chearful; if he lives soberly, righteously, and godly; where this is the Case, God is honoured, the Gospel of Jesus is glorified, and shines forth to View on Earth in its heavenly Charms. He that thus preaches, thus lives, shall meet a gracious and ample Reward, and receive higher Degrees of Glory than will await Persons of lower Attainments in Light and Grace, Purity, Labour, and Usefulness. On the contrary, there are some Professors and Preachers of Christianity (says the Apostle) whom I may compare to a Man, who hath indeed laid a good Foundation in his Building, even of Stones, firm, fair, and precious; but what does he build upon it, but *Wood, Hay, and Stubble*? A mere Cottage, a feeble and unsightly Hovel upon so bright and solid a Foundation! By this Metaphor, says the Apostle, I mean to point out those who, whilst they embrace Christ in his Doctrine, and preach him as the Messiah and Saviour, yet mingle the Ceremonies of the Law with the Spirituality of the Gospel; or imbibe Notions or indulge to Practices disagreeable to the Gospel, worthless, contemptible, heterogeneous to the divine Foundation, and perishing. Yet where such a one
holds

holds the Head, and builds upon the true Foundation, he shall be saved, *yet so as by Fire*; i. e. he shall have a narrow Escape. He will be like a Man whose House is on fire, and himself is in danger of being consumed; he leaps out of a Window, or rushes through the Flame; it is with Difficulty that Life is preserved, and he is content to leave every thing behind him a Prey to the devouring Element, whose Rage is increased by the Combustibles which himself has collected: his Works are Fewel for this vengeful Flame, *viz. Wood, Hay, and Stubble*. In the mean time let every one recollect with fixed Attention, and the deepest Seriousness, that there is a Day coming, which as Fire will penetrate and discover every thing. Does Fire shew the *Refiner* what is Metal and what is Dross? Will the latter be burnt up, while the other acquires a purer Lustre, so will it be *then*. The great Day of Conflagration will be a Day of severe and exact Examination. That Day will expose to view the Vanity of many Things which are now admired, which some pompous Preachers value themselves upon, and for which their Votaries extol them as Men of distinguished Genius.

THIS, I am persuaded, is the real Meaning of the Place; and this gives to Preachers and Hearers an interesting Admonition to keep close

to the Gospel in studying, preaching, and Conversation, in Notions admitted, in Doctrines propagated, and in all manner of Practice. When Christ is preached as the only Saviour, let all receive him as such, and never pretend to join any with him as Coadjutors. When Jesus is proclaimed King in *Zion*, let none make or impose any thing as Terms of Communion which Christ never did ; and, since he hath told us how he will be worshipped, let us not prescribe any other Method, or pretend to decorate and adorn the Ordinances of Christ, as too simple and plain, for this would be only to varnish the Sun, or paint a Diamond. Alas ! this is the Rise of all that Superstition which is abroad in the Christian World. But let none build any thing which favours of Pride upon the humble Jesus, and upon a Foundation which tends to humble the Redeemed; as saved entirely by Grace, while it is sure to all that are built upon it. Let then the solid Graces of the Christian Life, let the substantial Duties of practical Religion, beneficial and comfortable as they are, be the *only Materials* of our Building ; these will continue, these the Christian will hear of with Comfort another Day. But as for observing *Doctrines which are the Commandments of Men*, or the Creatures of our own Brain, how specious soever they may appear, and however ourselves or others may zealously

lously affect them (contending for Ceremonies as if contending for the Faith delivered to the Saints) these the all-revealing Day will unmask, and as with a Sun-beam, discover that they have not the Mark of God upon them, and so will not be owned. Perhaps some Persons of this Stamp are deeply drenched in Superstition, and so fond of their Inventions and Fooleries that they would not part with them for all the World; but let such know that the Fire of the last Day will discover many of their most serious Labours to have been light as the Thistle-down and Chaff, and inflammable as Stubble, Hay, and rotten Wood, which, when brought into Judgment, and weighed in God's Ballances, can no longer conceal their Emptiness and Vanity. At this Sight we may suppose the poor Creature begins to be astonished; but upon a farther Enquiry, his Foundation is safe, his Faith was fixed upon the Corner-stone laid in *Zion*, and he hath a sure but a narrow Escape. Then, with the opening Blaze of Eternity bursting upon the Sight, he views with deep Concern what is past, thinking how egregiously he was mistaken in many Things; while with Thankfulness he lifts up his Heart, that he was not as much mistaken in laying the Foundation, as in carrying on the Superstructure.

MAY not the Expression of being saved *yet so as by Fire*, represent also the Case of one who hath sorely backslidden? What sad Work doth his Sin make? Sad Depredations upon Conscience, which is wounded, polluted, and perhaps for a Time grievously hardened. And when the benumbed Soul is by the sacred Spirit rous'd and alarmed, and the straying Sheep is brought home again to the Redeemer's Fold, yet who can describe the Consternation, distressing Fears, and terrifying Apprehensions which even then afflict and harrass the Soul? When *God's Arrows stick fast in him, and his Hand presseth him sore*, hear such a one crying out, "*My Iniquities are gone over my Head as a heavy burthen; they are too heavy for me; I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the Day long; I am feeble and sore-broken, I have roared by reason of the Disquietness of my Heart*". In short, though such Souls are upon a right Foundation, though they have by Faith really laid hold on Christ, and he by his Spirit hath taken hold on them, yet such shall be saved *as by Fire*; they go to Heaven, but it is by the Gates of Hell. O what a Warning is here to Professors? What an Enemy is a careless Walk to the Peace and Prosperity of the Christians? How deceitful are the Lusts of the Flesh? They carry Smiles in their

* Psal. xxxiii. 4.—6.—8.

Face, but afterwards *sting like a Serpent, and bite like an Adder* ! How much better is it to deny ourselves, to be constantly watchful, and so to maintain our Peace, than to walk at random, to fall into the Pollutions of Sin, and upon the Rocks which will bruise and wound us, and cause us to complain of broken Bones ?

MR. THOMAS.

YOUR Comment, Sir, on these Words, has not only confirmed my previous Sentiments, but made the Matter more clear than before : nor can I see that Reason has any thing to object to what you have offered. May we be wise Builders, both in laying the Foundation and carrying on the Superstructure, till the Top-stone is brought forth with everlasting Shouts of Joy !

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

IF a Transition at once from the great Things of Religion to the Furniture of our Houses may not be too abrupt, I would mention what has some Affinity to the Subject that has been long engaging our Attention, I mean that little odd Contrivance a *Pair of Bellows*. It is a Piece of Furniture quite common, and scarcely rises to the Honour of our lowest Regard ; but it is such a useful Contrivance, as I know not how our Fires could be preserved and properly quickned, according to the Need we have of them, without

it. With the Help of this despicable Implement, we soon raise our infant or decay'd Fires to Brightness and Heat; our Bodies are warmed, our Provision is prepared, and the Ends of the Fire's being kindled are quickly and better answered. I persuade myself, was a proper Person to undertake it, an entertaining and profitable Dissertation might be made upon a *Pair of Bellows*. I see the Company smiles, and yet I am not quite out of Countenance in respect to the Proposal I have made.

FATHER.

Fire-Bellows are a Machine contrived to compress the circumambient Air into a narrow Compass, and, when thus compressed, to shoot it out by a narrow Aperture or Opening, so as that it shall enter the Fire it is applied to with a Force more or less as is designed. This is done by means of a *Valve*, commonly called a *Clack*, which opens on the Extension of the Bellows, and on a Compressure, shuts down, and so forces the Air into the contracted Pipe. *Bellows* that are large, and intended for the invigorating great Fires, are wrought with Water; but of the Use of common ones, their Structure and Design, I need not say any thing. Now should I attempt to spiritualize them, I should not strain the Metaphor was I to represent thereby the Method

Method which the Spirit of God makes use of to advance and recover the Work of Holiness in the Hearts of his People. The Wind is the Spirit which blows upon our Souls, and the *Bellows* are the Words and other Ordinances, Providences both prosperous and adverse, by means of which he promotes the great Business of our Sanctification. Where the Materials invite the Fire, Bellows are unnecessary. Who makes use of them to blow up *Gunpowder*, or kindle *Spirit of Wine*? But where the Fewel is not readily penetrable, hard, and rocky, as our Coal, or watry and opposing the Fire, as the Wood when green and full of Sap, then it is that the *Bellows* are needed. And are not our Hearts such? Who does not find it? And what Christian is there who does not lament, and strive, and pray against it? Is it not often the Language of the devout Soul with *David*, “My Soul cleaveth to the Dust, quicken thou me according to thy Word *?” Or, as mournfully sings Dr. *Watts’s* Muse,

My Heart, how dreadful hard it is!

How heavy here it lies!

Heavy and cold within my Breast,

Just like a Rock of Ice.

* Psal. cxix. 25.

H 4

How

How feldom do I rise to God,
Or taste the Joys above?
This Mountain presses down my Faith,
And chills my flaming Love.

And, if this is the Case, who does not want the sacred Spark to be quickned? And it deserves devout Attention, that the Holy Ghost makes use of this very Simile, *Stir up the Gift which is in thee* *. All our Criticks observe, that the Expression is taken from the Method used in raising a small Fire to a more vehement Flame,

Cum Scintilla molli Flatû exsuscitatur. *Piscat.*

Ἀναζωπυρίω est Ignem Cineribus conditum
Folle aut Flatû suscitare ut reardescat.

Cornel. à Lapid.

The Breath of Gospel-Ministers, when they breathe upon cold Hearts and stupid Spirits, is often owned of God to this End. Under the Word read, and especially under the Word preached, Souls benum'd and almost motionless, have received divine Warmth; Knowledge has been improved, and Comforts (before unknown in the Soul) have been imparted. *Prayer* has frequently been the *Bellows* for blowing up good Desires to an holy Ardency. Christians have found that the very Employment hath infused

* 2 Tim. i. 6.

Warmth,

Warmth, and the Effects have been more enlivening still. *Meditation* hath been sometimes peculiarly helpful in this great Affair. *While we have been musing, the Fire hath burned*; and the Season hath been, while it lasted, as a pleasant Summer breaking in upon the Winter of the Soul. And as you, my dear Children, should be using these Means, each for yourselves, so there are Seasons when each may perform the Office of *Bellows* to the other. *A Word fitly spoken, how good is it?* Often hath the Lord blest it, and made it ever to be remembred. It has been the Vehicle of the Spirit indeed! and as it prov'd in Point of Pungency a *Goad* to press forwards, so in point of Continuance it was like a *Nail fastned in a sure Place*. Thus a Brother or Sister, if their Faithfulness is mixed with Caution, Prudence, and warm Affection, may serve the Purpose of the Bellows in a like Sense as an Heathen Poet calls himself a *Whetstone*,

—Ergo fungar Vice Cotis.

Horat. de Arte Poet:

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

I THINK myself happy to have started a thought which gave my honoured Father an Opportunity of speaking that which so apparently tends to the Edification of his Family.

May

May we learn by such Lessons, which every Family, I am sure, does not enjoy! But at present I think of no more Questions to propose respecting this Element upon which we have been so long hearing.

ELDEST SON.

MY dear *Molly*, a Thought suggests itself which I was going to address to you, but I restrain myself, as the striking Clock puts me in mind that our Hour is elapsed. If therefore a more mature Recollection does not suppress it it may be reserv'd to another Opportunity.



The Sixth Dialogue.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

I TRUST my good Father will excuse my opening this Conference, if he remembers what passed upon the breaking up of the last. I think I have a Claim upon my Eldest Brother, he told me he was going to address himself to *me*. If therefore he is so good as to proceed, I hope to be all Attention, and please myself with the Thought, that what comes from a Brother so *judicious* and *affectionate*, will not be in vain.

ELDEST SON.

MY dear Sister, however mistaken you may be when you call me *judicious*, I am sure you are not so when you term me *affectionate*. The Hint which I had in my Eye was occasioned by what passed in a former Conversation on the Subject of *Zeal*. It was, in a way of Caution, taken from the first Description which was given of *Fire*; namely, that it was the Cause and Instrument of Heat and Light. Now as these flow
from

from Heaven inseparably commingled, I have been thinking what Care we young People, who are setting out in Life, should take that our Light and Heat may be united in all our Conduct, especially in what relates to Things spiritual and divine. Heat without Light in the Mind, what Mischief has it done in Churches, and in the World ingeneral! And Light without Heat avails nothing to ourselves, whatever it may to others; such Persons may be like a Winter-Night when the Stars are refulgent, very clear, but very cold.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

BROTHER, I thank you; the Caution is good: I have often thought of it; and yet who can say they have considered it enough? Certain it is that we should never feel or express any Zeal, but according to Knowledge. It is Knowledge only that can give us a Distinction between Truth and Error, and Knowledge only can point out the Importance of both. It is no longer the Zeal of a Christian, if it is not upon an Apprehension of its being a Truth revealed, or a Duty inculcated by the Word of God, or plainly deducible thence; nor is any thing worthy my Zeal, unless my Knowledge assures me the Honour of God, the Good of my Soul, or that that of my Fellow-Creature is interested in it. In short, I have thought that it is not the Zeal of a rational Creature

ture if it be not founded upon Knowledge. How feeble soever my Understanding is, I have esteemed my Reason my *Glory*; and it is my Concern to act agreeably to *this Candle of the Lord* set up in me. By the Light of this Candle I see the Finger of God pointing out *my Bible as my Rule*; and to this, as my sovereign Directory, I would steadily adhere; never refusing any Helps which Providence may put within my Reach for understanding the Word; yet (conscious of our human Weaknesses) I would study Commentators with Caution, comparing them one with another, and all with the sacred Text. Thus would I endeavour to *prove all Things*, that, having discovered the true Intent of the Spirit of God, I may *hold faster than my Life that which* he has marked with the Characters of interesting and eternal Good. I would also pay a just Deference to wise and good Men, especially to judicious and godly Ministers; and observe with the greatest Care the Footsteps of the Flock, not daring wantonly to stray from them, as if I affected Novelty or loved Changes; but still I must judge for myself, after I have by Prayer entreated the divine Counsel and Conduct, and compared spiritual Things with spiritual. When I am thus established in a sacred Truth, have heard Objections, and seen their Fallacy, I have certainly a Warrant to be zealous, especially in those Points
which

which I think peculiarly important, capital, and leading Truths, charged with the Weight of God's Glory, and my own Happiness.

FATHER.

YOUR Words, my Dear, are Musick in my Ears: my Heart rejoices when *thy Lips speak right Things*. I would that you be zealously affected, but see to it that it be always in a good Cause. You do well never to set down any thing as a divine Truth, but what hath the Stamp of a divine Warrant. Be ever able to give a Reason of your Faith, a Reason of your Hope. *Call no Man Father on Earth in this respect, for one is your Father which is in Heaven*. Let the noble Bereans be your Pattern. Labour to be mighty in the Scriptures. If you have Doubts, propose them. Dive to the Bottom of every Thing that is offered to you. It is owing much to half Knowledge and former Prejudices adhering to them that so many fall into dangerous Errors. In the Midst of all be *humble*. Pride is another Source of Error. When Men think they are capable of knowing every thing, the next Step they usually take is to throw aside a Truth as false, because they cannot comprehend *how* or *why* it is a Truth. If any thing you have embraced as Truth is opposed, defend it by such Arguments as are convictive to you.

In

In proportion to its conceived Importance, shew a Concern for it. Let Pity and every friendly Passion, and not Contempt, go along with the Argument. As for Rage and Rancour, Malice and Persecution, they are not the Weapons of our Warfare. Whenever you find yourselves mistaken, be more ashamed to continue in your Error, than to own you are wrong. Let it be Truth, and not Victory, for which you contend; and let us pray that this Temper may prevail all over the Christian World. The Want of it has been destructive of its Purity and Peace, and produced Heart-burnings, Animosities, and Persecutions. No sooner was the Gospel preached, but a blind Zeal drew its Sword and brandish'd it at the Breasts of its Friends and Adherents. The Apostle *Paul*, while a *Pharisee*, was fiery and furious, so as to be mad, exceeding mad against the Christians; and he who had been of that Party knew best how to describe them, as he does, when he says, *I bear them Record, that they have a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge* *. And this fierce Bigotry pushed them to establish the ceremonial Law, not knowing that it was abolished by the same Authority which at first appointed it. *Being ignorant of God's Righteousness, they went about to establish a Righteousness of their own*, and were madly jea-

* Romans, x. 2.

lous against all that were otherwise minded, scorning the Thought that the Disciples of *Jesus* should have a clearer Insight into divine Things than they. In the Exercise of this blind Zeal, the Heads of the *Jewish* Church imprisoned the first Preachers of the Gospel, whilst they were fairly from the Writings of *Moses* and the *Prophets* proving that *Jesus* was the Messiah. Others in lower Stations, actuated by the same blind Zeal, stirred up a Mob, the very Scum of the City, to baffle the Apostle's sacred Attempts. *The Jews which believed not, moved with Envy, (it is Zeal in the Greek) took unto them certain lewd Fellows of the baser Sort, and gathered a Company, and set all the City on an Uproar, and assaulted Jason, and sought to bring them out to the People* *. Thus flamed out their Zeal for the Traditions of their Fathers; thus furiously persecuted they the Church. And give me Leave to add, it is Zeal without Knowledge that, with her burning Torch, hath kindled all the Fires in *Smithfield*; that it is that which with her accursed Hands built the Inquisition, that supports the papal Chair, and hath shed Rivers of Christian Blood. O for more heavenly Light to be spread abroad by the Spirit of Knowledge, and that Zeal may never outrun its Director and Guide! May the Gospel in its pure and native Light be

* Acts, xvii. 5.

every where spread and shine; and till then may Providence put a Hook into the Nose, and a Bridle into the Lips of its deluded Opposers?

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

I HAVE been waiting, Sir, for one thing more. You have solidly warned us against Heat without Light, but may not Persons err in having *Light without Warmth*?

FATHER.

I THANK my dear *Molly*; the Hint you have given is highly interesting. It is indeed a very lamentable Case, with the Moon*, to have Light

* Let us place a Concave Speculum (such a one as when placed before the Sun collected more Fire by 7396 Times than there was in an equal Space in the circumambient Air) opposite to the Moon when she is at the Full in a serene cold Night; and the Light which the Moon receives from the Sun will be reflected from it upon the Speculum, and thence into its *Focus*, where a most resplendent and refulgent Light will be seen, almost equal to that received and reflected by the same Speculum from the Sun, only a little paler. Then place a *Thermometer*, which is easily moved by the least Degree of Heat or Fire in that refulgent *Focus*, and we shall find that the Air in the *Thermometer* will not be the least expanded or moved; which shews that there is no more Fire in that *Focus*, than there was before the resplendent Light was collected there. *Hillary on the Properties of Fire.*

in the Mind, and no sacred Affection in the Heart, and yet is not this the Case of many? Yea, God's own People complain that the Warmth of their Souls does not keep pace with the Instruction they have received, and the Convictions of their Consciences. O the obstructed Passage between the Head and Heart! how many Prejudices in the Will and Affections arise against what the Word declares, and the Understanding clearly discovers to be Duty? How many see their Sin to be Sin, and yet do not leave it? They see their Danger, and yet take no proper care to avoid it. They can speak of the Things of God distinctly, which shews they have regular Ideas, but find not any transforming Influence from their Light upon their Hearts. They can talk of God as infinitely great and powerful, and yet never bow before him in the inward Homage of the Soul, nor fear his Displeasure, nor ardently covet his Favour. They see him to be perfect Purity and Goodness, and yet do not love him; yea, instead of embracing him, wish him not to be at all. They know him with an Head-Knowledge to be faithful, and yet are not affected either by his Promises or Threatnings, tho' they own that there is compleat Happiness in the first, and as compleat Misery in the last. They have Christ revealed *to*, but feel him not revealed *in* them. This is the Reason that many can

can discourse on the Mediation of Christ, the Offices he executes, and the End and Manner of his Death, his Grace and Merit, his Victory and Power, and yet never fly to him, nor as their Saviour and Hope prize him. They own their Obligations to him, and yet neither love him nor praise him, nor are zealous to promote his Honour, nor will they consent in any Form whatsoever to suffer for him. They can harangue upon Death and Judgment, and yet prepare for neither. They can discuss this Theme the Vanity of the World, can paint its Fashions as passing away, and yet at the same time continue eager to secure, embrace, and keep them. They know and confess that they must be brought into Judgment hereafter, and yet are quite careless in their Behaviour, and never *exercise themselves to keep a Conscience void of Offence*. They can from the Word talk of Heaven, as a State of pure and perfect Blessedness, but their Commerce and Communion are not there. They can represent Hell as a dreadful *Tophet*, and yet be far from flying from Sin, the high Road leading thither, or, making sure of *Jesus*, though it is his Prerogative only to *save from Wrath to come*. This Point ought to be peculiarly attended to by those who are trained up in sacred Learning, and whose daily Employment it is, by studying, reading, and thinking, to gain fresh

Ideas, and extract one divine Truth from another. Are not such in Danger of being so pleased with a new Truth, or the fresh Evidence of an old one as to rest there, and to take no pains to get heavenly Truths impressed on their Hearts. As the chief Design of all Knowledge is to make the Heart better, we ought to dread being satisfied, unless this End is answered. *To hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*, is to sin with Aggravation; and the Wrath of God stands armed with peculiar Vengeance against such Transgressors. Such may be vainly puffed up with their Attainments now, but Knowledge unimproved will sink them the deeper into Misery, and *the Servant that knows his Master's Will, and does it not, will be beaten with many Stripes* *. The Story of the two Cardinals who were riding in great Pomp to the Council of Constance perhaps you have heard. They saw by the Way a poor Peasant sitting in a solemn Attitude, and with a very pensive Air looking on the Ground. They were inquisitive to know what he was looking at. He told them he was gazing upon that *Toad*, and thinking what a Mercy it was that God had not made him such a loathsome Creature. He discoursed so feelingly and piously on the Subject that one of them was struck, and turning about to the other, said, "*The Unlearned*

* Luke xiii. 47.

*" would arise and lay hold on Heaven, while we
 " with all our Learning go down to Hell."* How glad would the learned *Grotius* have been, in the Views of Death, to have exchanged his vast Stores of Knowledge for the Honesty and Religion of a poor but pious Neighbour of his, who was remarkable for spending a great deal of his Time in devotional Employments? Let us remember then that the Word is given as a Light not to play and trifle with, but to work by; *a Light to our Feet, and a Lamp to our Paths*; and as it is a Doctrine according to Godliness, and designed to *teach us to deny Ungodliness, that we may live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World*, the End is not answered unless we are made really wiser and better by it.

ELDEST SON.

THIS Part of your Discourse is, as it were, calculated for my Meridian; the Caution and Exhortation contained in it are peculiarly adapted to my Case. Since I have entered into the Study of Philosophy I have found that learned Subtleties are very apt to steal away the Heart; nay, even the Study of controversial Divinity has its Snares; and, while I have been increasing in Learning, I have felt the Savor of Truth pall and sicken. This has often put me in mind of a solemn Charge, which (I have somewhere read)

the famous Professor *Ames* gave to a young Divine of sprightly Parts and great Learning, *viz.*
 • That he should take Care he did not fall under that great Plague, *a clear Head and a cold Heart.* May divine Influences excite me to watch against this ineffectual Knowledge, this Insensibility of Soul, more than ever I have done! But I am waiting to hear with what my good Father will farther entertain us.

FATHER.

I CAN'T dismiss the Point under our Consideration without observing that the *Afflictions* of the present Life, especially those of God's People, are represented under the Emblem of Fire. Sin and Carnality are the Impurity and Rust of the Soul. It is God's great Aim to purify; for this End the Word is commissioned, and Prophets and Ministers sent, yet sent to some in vain. *Is not my Word like as a Fire, saith the Lord**, and some are melted and purged by it; but with respect to others, Afflictions long and severe (the feeling Demonstrators of eternal Things) are sent to do the Work effectually. Thus † God seems to compare himself to an Artificer in Gold and Silver, whose precious Metal is tarnished, or the Form demolished by many and severe Bruises. He asks, *How shall I*

* Jeremiah xxiii. 29.

† Ibid. ix. 7.

do for the Daughter of my People? It is his own People, and must not be cast off; he resolves therefore, *that he will melt them and try them.* Is Fire refining? And shall not the Artist employ it, not because he flights the precious Metal, but because he would restore its former Lustre? In like Manner, if need be, God's People are in Heaviness, that *the Trial of their Faith, being much more precious than of Gold that perisheth, may be found to Praise, Honour and Glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ* *. The Expectation they would issue well supported Job under his Sorrows; nay, probably he found them operating well already; he felt within himself more Humility and Patience, more Conformity and Resignation to the Divine Will, and therefore said, *When I am tried I shall come forth as Gold* †. Happy Job! though he owned he had taken many a false Step, yet he could in the main approve himself upright. He, that God that knows all Things, *knoweth the Way that I take.* Hereupon he chearfully admits this relieving Hope that his fore Afflictions would be for Trial, and not for Destruction, and that his Sorrow would as a Cloud pass away, but, while it remained, descend in Showers of Blessing. Let none judge the Christian then because he is sorely afflicted. Sinners may be passed by in Judgment, whilst

* 1 Peter i. 7.

† Job xxiii. 10.

Saints are chastened in Mercy. Sinners may be permitted to fill up the Measure of their Iniquity, to *spend their Days in Mirth and their Years in Laughter*, whilst their Hearts grow every Day more carnal, and all Circumstances conspire, through their Abuse of them, to lull them into a deep and fatal Security. Are Christians under alarming Providences? It is that they may be more wakeful and lively in their Graces and Services. *They are chastened of the Lord, that they might not be condemned with the World**. While Corruption remains in the Heart there will be occasion for the Lord's Fire in order to purge it out. The Consciousness of this makes Saints patient and submissive; yea, a Sense of this excites them to pray for the Sanctification more than the Removal of their Troubles; that *as the refining Pot is to the Silver and the Furnace to the Gold*, so these Sorrows may promote their best, their everlasting Interests. And afterwards they have reckoned their Afflictions, though so grievous now, among the choicest of the divine Favours, and they have experienced their Souls to thrive in Humility and Spirituality by all. Happy Troubles that operate and end well! Happy that *Sadness of the Countenance, by which the Heart is made better!* Blessed Covenant! in which seasonable Afflictions are pro-

* 1 Cor. xi. 32.

mised to prevent total and final Apostacy from
 the Rock of our Salvation: and I must add,
 blessed Covenant, in which God is pleased to
 engage to be with his People in those fiery Trou-
 bles, through which in the Way of their Duty
 they are called to pass. *When thou passest through
 the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the
 Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou
 passest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, nei-
 ther shall the Flame kindle upon thee**. To be
 with them is to afford them Grace to bear their
 Troubles aright, so as that Tribulation may
 work Patience, that they *may glorify the Lord in
 the Fires* †. When the People of God acknow-
 ledge and adore his Sovereignty, acquiesce in his
 Wisdom, and trace in Darkness the wondrous
 Footsteps of his Grace, it is to support their Spi-
 rits that they may not sink or be overpowered,
 and that the Afflictions may so operate as to
 work out for them *a far more exceeding and eter-
 nal Weight of Glory* ‡. O glorious Privilege (will
 Faith say) to be pruned with the Vine for Or-
 nament and Fruit, rather than to be suffered to
 shoot out continually with the neglected Bram-
 ble, to be cut down, rooted up, and cast into
 the Fire at last. May I and my Children be
 thus dealt with! and though Afflictions in them-
 selves are not joyous but grievous, though Nature

* Isaiah xliii. 2. † Ibid. xxiv. 15. ‡ 2 Cor. iv. 17.

recoils at the thought of them, yet, when necessary, may we have them in the same way that the pious *Jews* experienced them, of whom their divine Proprietor and Saviour said, *I will bring a third Part through the Fire, and will refine them as Silver is refined, and will try them as Gold is tried; they shall call on my Name and I will bear them; I will say, it is my People, and they shall say the Lord is my God**. And though the Lord lays Affliction on our Loins, though we go through Fire and Water, yet if he does us good in the best, in the spiritual Sense, he bringeth us really into a wealthy Place; and we shall on that Account have reason to call upon ourselves and those about us, to *blefs God, and to make the Voice of his Praise be heard* †.

Lord, thou hast prov'd our suffering Souls
To make our Graces shine;
So Silver bears the burning Coals
The Metal to refine.

Through watry Deeps and fiery Ways
We march at thy Command,
Led to possess the promis'd Place
By thine unerring Hand.

ON the other Side, take care that the Lord does not find Reason to make the same Com-

* Zech. xiii. 9.

† Psalm lxvi. 8—12
plaint

plaint of you when under sore Afflictions as of his antient People in this metaphorical Language, *The Bellows are burnt, the Lead is consumed of the Fire, the Founder melteth in vain. Reprobate Silver shall Men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them* *. q. d. “ The Bellows have been
 “ kept so near the Fire to blow it that they are
 “ scorched. The Prophets have employed their
 “ Breath in exhorting and reproving so long,
 “ that their very Throats are dry and sore. The
 “ *Lead* used to refine is burnt up, but has not
 “ done its Office, and so the Pains of the Refiner
 “ are lost, and they are found to be reprobate
 “ Silver ; there is really no good Metal in them,
 “ and now the Lord rejects them.” He will
 try them no more, but passes this irreversible Sentence upon them, *Because I have purged thee* (i. e. have employed the Means for that Purpose again and again) *and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy Filthiness any more, till I have caused my Fury to rest upon thee* †.

MISS SUKEY.

THERE is a Place of Scripture, Sir, which has run much in my Mind since we have been upon this Subject of *Fire* ; you can tell better than I can where it is, and what the Holy Spirit

* Jer. vi. 29, 30.

† Ezek. xxiv. 13.

would

would have me learn from it. *You were as a Firebrand pluckt out of the burning.*

FATHER.

THEY are the Words of *Amos* the Prophet*. In the former Verses the Lord had been telling his People for their Conviction, what Methods of Correction he had used with them for their Reformation; but that under these they had remained incorrigibly perverse. For many Wickednesses he had brought them low; desolating Judgments, in various Forms, one after another had been let loose among them, so that it was a Wonder they were yet a People, not pluck'd up and scattered; nay, they are in this Metaphor represented to be in the Case of that Piece of Wood which is now all on Fire, and in a little Time must be inevitably consumed, if suffered to continue where it is; so that nothing can possibly preserve it, but snatching it thence, and that with speed. Thus as a Nation, whilst Judgments were performing their awful Work upon them, an Hand of Mercy rescued them from the threatening Ruin.

THIS Expression, *a burning Brand*, is also a fit Description of a recovered Sinner; so with reference to his Conversion even *Joshua* the High-Priest seems to be called *a Brand pluckt out of*

* Chap. iv. 11.

the Fire *, and every Soul that is saved is *snatched* with an Hand of Divine Vehemence, moved quick by eternal Love, *from that Power of Darknefs*, which long concealed his Danger from his own View †. But the Phrase before us with a peculiar propriety describes the State of a Sinner who a little while ago seemed in the Suburbs of Death and entering into an eternal World, which in such a Case could be no other than an eternal Hell. Indeed for such a one to stand at any time (as he does in his best Health) encompassed with ten thousand Diseases and Disasters is a Circumstance big with Horror; as, upon a sovereign Nod of Providence, any of them may be let loose to tear his Soul from the Body, and plunge it into Hell; but when the Body sickens as a Flower, when Death seems aiming the fatal Dart at his Bosom, how apparent does the Danger present itself! the Escape how narrow! When we behold the Soul, as it were, sitting upon the quivering Lips of the dying Flesh, how dreadful is its Situation! It is not likely to continue in the Body, and yet it is not prepared for a Dislodgment! To all Appearance it is just ready to take its Flight to an eternal Abode, and yet it is neither justified nor sanctified! God is unreconciled, and the Enemy of the Sinner! Christ the Mediator of Reconciliation has often been

* Zech. iii. 2.

† Col. i. 13. *εργαστο.*

tender'd,

tender'd, but never accepted! Arms have been taken up against his Sovereign, but never thrown down! Ten thousand Articles of Guilt are standing against him, and not one expunged! He has a Multitude of Lusts, and all the hellish Brood are in their full Power, not one mortified! In such a Case what is the Condition of the poor Creature? The Devils are ready to seize him, the Body is daily sinking, and the Soul more and more hurried on towards the infernal Abyss! Then if Love Divine draws near with Beamings of Mercy, stops the Course of the Disease, pronounces the Return, and gives the Sinner a few Days or Years more, in this Case the Body is a Morsel rescued from the Ravages of Worms, and the Soul is a Brand pluck'd, as it were, out of the Burnings of Hell.

AND scarce with fainter Rays shines the Grace of the Declaration, *Ye were as a Firebrand pluckt out of the Burning*, when a Person in Health hath been *wonderfully* rescued by converting Grace, whose every Step before was tending to the Mouth of Hell. When I see such a one brought to Christ, snatch'd perhaps out of a wicked Family, where the whole of his Education consisted in that which carried in it a notorious Contrariety to the Means of Grace, as Ignorance, Impiety, the worst of Examples, Encouragement

couragement and Incitement to all that is vicious ; or if the Family has been better, yet when I see a poor Creature absolutely averse to all the Means of Instruction and Reformation, perhaps glorying in his Wickedness, eager to defy divine Justice, and dare its Power, as if in haste to fill up the Measure of his Iniquity ; when I see this Man, this Woman, by some Word or some Providence guided by a divine Hand strangely stopt in their dreadful Career, and turned to God, may I not say, Here are Brands pluckt out of the Burning ? The Sinner grows thoughtful, sees the Evil of Sin, and himself upon the Precipice of Ruin ; he starts back, laments his Case ; uses now the Language he scoffed at once ; enquires after the Saviour, “ O that I knew where I “ might find him ! ” Those Knees which first smote one against the other are afterwards bent in humble Devotion, while the Eyes flowing with Tears are elevated in Prayer. The Bible and other good Books, with the People of God, are his Companions. When Wisdom’s Gates are opened, he hungers and thirsts after her Provisions, and watches at the Posts of her Doors. They suit his Case, and relish better than all the Delights of Sense and Sin. His Countenance, his Dress, his Gesture, his Behaviour are humble, because his Heart is so. O wondrous Change ! when such a Wretch, who a little Time

ago was eagerly bent upon Wickedness, is thus seen honourably, seriously, thankfully panting after Glory, and making meet for it; may it not be said, "*Surely this is a Brand pluck'd out of the Burning!*"

MISS SUKEY.

SIR, with deepest Duty I thank you. I am apprehensive if you will indulge me once more, I shall give you no more Trouble. I have read in the 23d Verse of the Epistle of *Jude*, "*Others save with fear, pulling them out of the Fire.*" If I may be favoured with your Thoughts upon this Place I shall hope for Edification and Pleasure.

FATHER.

It is no irksome Task to instruct and exhort my dear Children. Does the Mother take Pleasure in opening her Breasts to her Child? So is it my Duty, so is it my Delight, *to exhort, and comfort, and charge you, as a Father doth his Children.* The Apostle *Jude*, in the Place you refer to, is giving prudential Directions how to behave towards various sorts of Offenders. The general Design towards all is the reclaiming them. But as they greatly differ in Temper and Degree of Offence, so various Means are to be employ'd. They who have offended through mistake with
an

an honest Heart, or thoughtlessly, or, if they have offended presumptuously, have already be-
 thought themselves, must be dealt with with great
 Tenderness. Gentle Remonstrances, with the
 Blessing of God, may effectually recover and
 confirm them. But where Persons are daringly
 wicked, and seem to defy God and Man, such
 save with Fear. Let *your Fear*, lest it should be
 too late, put you upon an immediate Attempt, and
 attempt their Salvation by endeavouring to excite
their Fear. Lenity and Mildness may do for
 others who have not run to such Lengths, but
 an holy Severity is best adapted to Persons of this
 Cast. Tell them of the Threatenings of God
 against these Things, and that they which do
 them are worthy of Death. Knowing the Ter-
 rors of the Lord, fill your Mouth with Persua-
 sives. *Pull them out of the Fire*. Heaven com-
 mands us to deal with such as with a Child, or
 any Thing valuable fallen into the Fire. Would
 you delay? O no; there is no Time for delibe-
 rating, no Room for taking Counsel. In such
 a Case would you not be in good Earnest? They
 who pull any Thing precious out of the Fire ex-
 ert themselves and all their Powers. A Sense
 of the Value of it, and a Sight of its present
 Circumstances make them forget a little Pain

and Danger; and indeed the Greek Word* enjoins this Vigour, Earnestness, and Violence. O what a Pattern was blessed Paul in his Attempt to save Souls? "*In Season and out of Season;*" *he would be all Things to all Men*, if by any condescending Methods *he might save some*; and was willing to *spend and be spent*. So to the Elders of the Church of *Ephesus* he appeals, that for three Years together *he had warned them Night and Day with Tears* †. O that more Attempts were made upon profligate Sinners, with a most serious, dependant Eye upon the divine Blessing! That Christians were as bold and courageous in reproving, as Sinners are in offending! and as resolute and unwearied in the Prosecution of the Conversion of Souls, as the Wicked are in the Practice of what is evil. If a Neighbour's House is on Fire, or in imminent Danger, or his Furniture is ready to fall a Prey to the merciless Flames, where is the Person that will not attempt to help? Who is so devoid of Bowels as to refuse? Or if any is so who does not scruple to reproach him? On the other Hand, who refuses help? Nay, who does not desire it? Who stands in the Way of him that is ready to rush into Danger to rescue the Life or Goods of a Neighbour? And most of all, where is the

* Αγπαλω.

† Acts xx. 31.

Person that shall be angry with his Neighbour for making the charitable Attempt? But let the Sons of Compassion ask, Whether a perishing Soul does not demand Concern and Pains more than a perishing Body or a perishing Habitation? And let the Reproved think what an horrid Mixture of Ingratitude, Folly, and Perverseness they shew, when they spurn at a pious Neighbour who, knowing the Value of his own Soul, would fain rescue theirs from the most tremendous, from everlasting Destruction. However, the People of God should consider, that it is no small Matter to have the Satisfaction of approving themselves to their divine Master, as having attempted to snatch, as out of the Fire of Hell, a Soul that was in the utmost Danger, and more precious than all material and temporal Things. And to have this acknowledged at last by the glorious Judge will more than compensate all the Uneasiness which may arise from the vain Anger of those who should have been best pleased. Remember, my dear Children, that as carnal Wisdom and heavenly are contrary Things, so Actions are differently censured and praised in the World and by the Word of God. We can scarce warn Men too much of spiritual Danger, provided it be done with Propriety of Circumstances. It is very good Manners to knock and

knock again at the Door of Sinners Consciences whilst there is any Hope, even though we had a Repulse, and were told we should not be welcome. Though they are angry, and account us their Enemies, would to God we could learn to treat them gently as spiritual Lunaticks, and not be discouraged !



The Seventh Dialogue.

FATHER.



WELCOME, my Children, how welcome to my Heart ! while you come in a Body upon this Occasion. While you open the dutious Ear to Heaven, while you are concerned to be sanctified in Christ Jesus, to be careful in your Stations, and observant of my Directions, I am ready to compare you to a string of Pearls, fair to my Eye, precious as my best Treasure. If any of you have any Observations to make, or Questions to ask, you have perfect Liberty of Speech.

If no one speaks I proceed to observe that I scarce know any Metaphor so suitable to express the divine Wrath as *Fire*, nor any Simile more frequently used than this in Scripture to represent it. If *Judah*, apprehensive of the Displeasure of *Joseph*, Governor of *Egypt*, entreats that *his Anger might not burn against him**, what in-

* Gen. xliv. 18.

finitely greater Reason have we to deprecate the
 Wrath of God under that awful Character?
Fire is an Element the most vehemently corro-
 sive! what is there whose Texture may not be
 dissolved by it? Feed it with a Quantity of Com-
 bustibles, and what dreadful Wonders will it
 perform? Go to the *Glass-houses*, where even
 the hardest *Flints* are liquefied, and say with
 Amazement what Matter so compact that its
 Parts cannot be separated by the Torture of Fire?
 But no Fire like that of the Wrath of God!
 for *with God is terrible Majesty*. Hear the un-
 erring Language of the Scripture upon this Head.
*As the Fire burneth the Wood, and the Flame set-
 teth the Mountains on fire, so persecute them with
 thy Tempest, and make them afraid with thy Storm**.
 When the mighty Governor of the World is
 coming forth in a way of dreadful Resentment
 against provoking Sinners with these Words
 addressed to their Senses he awakes their sleeping
 Fear, *Behold the Lord will come with Fire, and
 with his Chariots like a Whirlwind, to render his
 Anger with Fury, and his Rebuke with Flames of
 Fire†*. When the Lord is calling his apostate
 People to Repentance the forcible Motive used
 is taken from the direful Effects of his just Re-
 sentment, like those of the overpowering resist-
 less Conflagration; *Lest my Fury*, says he, *come*

* Psal. lxxxiii. 14, 15.

† Isaiah lxvi. 15.

forth like Fire, and burn that none can quench it *.

To the same Purpose are those startling Interrogations, *Who can stand before his Indignation? And who can abide in the Fierceness of his Anger? His Fury is poured forth like Fire, and the Rocks are thrown down by him* †. But perhaps no where is the Metaphor more express and strong than in the following Passage: *As they gather Silver, and Brass, and Iron, and Lead, and Tin into the Midst of the Furnace, to blow the Fire upon it to melt it, so will I gather you in mine Anger, and in my Fury, and I will leave you there and melt you. Yea, I will gather you, and blow upon you in the Fire of my Wrath, and ye shall be melted in the Midst thereof. As Silver is melted in the Midst of the Furnace, so shall ye be melted in the Midst thereof, and ye shall know that I the Lord have poured out my Fury upon you* ‡. What, my dear Children, is the Language of all this, but that we should ever fear before the Lord? What Reason have we to deprecate a Displeasure so terrible! Have you seen a poor Creature flying affrighted from the Wrath of a proud and daring Oppressor? Have some even fled into the Arms of Death, rather than subject themselves to the mighty Rage of a Fellow-worm? and are they afraid of him to whom it must be ever said, *Thou couldst have no*

* Jer. iv. 4.
20, 21, 22,

† Nah. i. 6.

‡ Ezek. xxii.

Power against me except it was given thee from above? How ought his Frowns to be dreaded, who doom'd fallen Angels, the Hierarchies of Heaven, to the Pit of Destruction, and, in spite of all their boisterous and unrelenting Rage, holds them fast in everlasting Chains of Darkness? Who knoweth the Power of his Anger? I charge you then, my dear Hopes and Cares, as I have often charged my own Soul, that you continue not contentedly one Hour the Objects of the Almighty's Wrath. Have your Sins awakened his Anger? Hath he spoke terrible Things in Righteousness by the Threatnings of the Law? Does he indeed with a Countenance of Lightning and a Voice of Thunder draw forth and brandish his vengeful Sword? O fly to his Mercy, prostrate yourselves immediately at his Feet, lay hold on the Hope set before you in the Gospel, and prize the Mediator's Atonement and Intercession. Let his *Righteousness* be your Refuge, the strong Hold under which you continually abide, nor let any Thing be connived at or indulged which may rouse his Wrath.*

To inforce this Exhortation, consider, if you could sufficiently, how many Ways the Almighty hath of expressing his Wrath and making it terrible to his Enemies? He can easily let loose all

* Psalm xc. 11.

the Creatures in his Hands that have any Connection with us, and as a Swarm of Bees they shall each join to revenge their Creator's Quarrel, and with their invenomed Stings fight his Battles. How soon may our Enemies be commissioned to ravage our Substance by Violence, or over-reach us by Fraud? How soon may numerous Diseases change a healthful Constitution and a blooming Countenance into Sickness, Pale-ness, and Death? These Things we are taught to consider as God's *rebuking us for our Iniquity* *. Or, we may read the just Anger of the Almighty in the just or in the causeless Anger of Fellow-creatures. When the Lord was angry with *Jehoram* for his Idolatries, he *stirred up against him the Spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians that were near the Ethiopians* †. Or, if Providence does not so openly enter into the Controversy, yet our offended Maker may by an invisible Hand distil some Drops of his Wormwood and Gall into our Cups of Delight, and turn them into Bitterness, so that, though Estates and Friends are still seen around us as before, yet the Person shall not enjoy any Comfort in them. Yea, how soon can he commission Conscience, as his Deputy, to indict us for our Rebellions, convict us of our Ingratitude, assure us of God's dreadful Displeasure, and cause us

* Psalm xxxix. 11.

† 2 Chron. xxi. 16.

immediately to feel it? This was expressed very
 seriously in a Sermon we read in the Family a
 few Days ago. “ The Sentence of the broken
 “ Law is like the Hand-writing to *Belshazzar*,
 “ loosing the joints of his Loins, and making
 “ his Knees smite one against another. How sad
 “ to look back on a Life spent in Sin? How
 “ fearful to look forward to the Wrath treasured
 “ up against the Day of Wrath? How ama-
 “ zingly sad to have Treasures of Wrath laid
 “ up in store against me? To be condemned
 “ already, and have the Wrath of God abiding
 “ on me? To eat and drink under Wrath, buy
 “ and sell, lie down and rise up, and all under
 “ Wrath? To be on the Brink of Eternity,
 “ having no more than a Breath between my
 “ Soul and the Place of Torment, where the
 “ Wrath of God is poured out without Mix-
 “ ture. All the Comforts of Life are imbitter’d
 “ from the dreadful Apprehension of what is to
 “ follow; as a Man condemned cannot put
 “ the expected Execution out of his Thoughts.
 “ This makes a Man eat Ashes with Bread, and
 “ causes him to mingle his Drink with Tears;
 “ this causes his Life to abhor Bread, and his
 “ Soul dainty Meat. Through this he tastes
 “ no Sweetness in any Comforts, but they all
 “ become to him tasteless, as *Job* speaks, *like the*
 “ *White of an Egg*. His Sleep departs from him,
 “ or

“ or is interrupted with scaring Visions and terrifying Dreams. The Man in such a Case looks on his Right Hand and Refuge fails, on his Left Hand and no Help appears.” Then it is that *Jesus* is acceptable, his Name is as Ointment poured forth; the Sound of it in the Gospel is sweet celestial Musick; the Merit of his Death, the Ardour, Constancy, and Success of his Intercession, the undeniable Safety of all those who are sheltered by him, and the Dreadfulness of the Vengeance which is the Sinner’s Due all concur to recommend the Redeemer, and endear his Salvation. Now that *his Wrath is kindled but a little* to what it will be hereafter the Cry of the sensible Soul is, *Blessed are all they who put their Trust in him* *. My dear Children, so furious is the Fire of God’s Wrath, that it can dart and penetrate into the most secret Recesses of the Soul; can storm the stoutest Spirit that ever resided in human Breast; can turn the softest Bed into Thorns, the sweetest Slumbers into Anxiety and Convulsion, and cause the Sinners that feel the Terrors of the Almighty to cry out with *Cain, My Punishment is greater than I can bear* †, who now are daring Omnipotence, and with the brutish *Leviathan* laughing at the shaking of the Spear? O could I speak to the whole World of impenitent

* Psalm ii. 12.

† Gen. iv. 13.

Sneerers,

Sneerers, I would call upon them to look to the Precipice on whose extreme Edge they are standing, and the Slipperiness of that Path which they are treading; I would call upon them to weep and howl since their Misery draws nigh; to put on Sackcloth while Sorrow will avail, and to fly to him who alone can avert the Wrath of God, and introduce a poor broken-hearted Sinner into the Presence of his offended Sovereign and Father with Acceptance and Joy.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

THIS is awful to hear of! more so for our Thoughts to dwell upon it for a Time; and yet I am preparing to hear something more terrible.

FATHER.

AND well you may, if you expect that I should speak to you of the Fire of Hell, the Indignation and Wrath, the Tribulation and Anguish which are laid up in Store against the Perdition of ungodly Men in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone. It is unmixed Wrath. As in the Paradise provided for the Saints we read of the *pure* River of Water of Life, so there is in Hell a *pure*, unmixed Fire of Wrath. In this World the Lord is good to all; his Sun shines and his Showers fall upon the Fields of the Just and Unjust; hereby he abundantly

dantly testifies his Goodness, and would by that Goodness lead them to Repentance ; but in Hell Sorrow is unmingled. Upon the Wicked, who are driven away in their Wickedness, and who die as they lived, *rebellious*, an offended God will rain *Snares, Fire and Brimstone*; *this*, without any Mitigation, any Alloy, *shall be the Portion of their Cup* * ; which Words evidently refer to the Destruction of *Sodom* ! It shall certainly come ; nor will there be any more a Defence against it, than there can be to a Traveller through a wide and barren Wilderness from the Tempests of the Sky ! no way of Escape, no Shelter, no Help. And the Spirit of God may well notify to Sinners the future Destruction under the awful Metaphor of Fire, not only as the Destruction of *Sodom* was *terrible*, and no Method of Escape was left, but as that was designed to be a standing Figure of the future and more terrible Vengeance of Hell †. This Wrath, as it will immediately prey upon the Sinner, now become a naked immaterial Spirit, must of consequence be inexpressibly more terrible than any Thing it has hitherto felt. Such Impressions made on the Soul in the Body, would have crushed, distorted, and overturned all the Powers of Nature at once ; yea, the Sensations of the Soul are blunted while incumbered with Flesh and Blood, and so

* Psalm xi. 6.

† Jude 7.

not able to feel so much. But no Objects in Hell are able to divert; nothing to please the Eye, the Ear, the Fancy! Uninterruptedly will the Attention of the Soul be fixed, and the Breath of Conscience will by fresh and keen Reflections be continually as it were blowing up this excruciating Fire. In this World, when all other Reliefs are wanting, there is one Refuge for the Miserable, namely, that these Sufferings will have an End; the longest, coldest, most stormy Night, or most dreary Winter, will come to an End, and be followed by a more chearful Scene; but Eternity hath no Close, no Period! The Worm which preys upon the most sensible Part of the Soul never dies, and the Fire never shall be quenched. Material Fuel will gradually spend, and the Fire of course be quenched; but Spirits are naturally unconsumable! And were they not so in their own Nature, yet, rather than Justice should not be glorified, and its awful Sentence be fully executed, divine Power shall be employed in supporting the miserable Object. It shan't sink into Annihilation, and take Refuge from the divine Power and Justice by retreating, may I so speak, into Nothing.

OH! my Children, learn never to trifle with the blessed Jehovah! Our God is more than all we have ever thought that is kind and good

to

to his returning, dutiful, obedient, and affectionate People; but let others know, let the thoughtless and giddy, let the presumptuous and abandoned Sinner know, that even *our God, the God of Grace, is a consuming Fire. Let Sinners in Zion be afraid, let Fearfulness surprize the Hypocrite, for who can dwell with devouring Flames? Who can dwell with everlasting Burnings*?* Oh! carry about always with you an awful Reverence of that God *who can not only kill the Body, but cast both Body and Soul into Hell†.*

LET Sin ever appear the most malignant Evil! Had not Sin entered the infernal Fire had never been kindled. What Fools are they who make a Mock of it? They in effect make a Mock of that *Tophet* which is the Wages of it! But who for a Drop of Honey would swallow Oceans of endless Gall and Wormwood? When a Temptation presents itself, divest it of its false Disguise, and you will see Brimstone and Fire contained within it. The more terrible this Fire of the Wrath of God is, the more should you prize Christ, the more should you value the Riches of Divine Grace in providing him, and the Gospel which reveals him, and the Way to him. Prize that precious Faith which leads you to that Christ who delivers us from Wrath to

* Isaiah xxxiii. 14.

† Matth. x. 28.

come. Seek it, cry for it, rest not satisfied till you have obtained it. Let Conscience have its full Scope in convincing you of Sin, though its Process be ever so severe. Better be wounded and be searched to the Bottom than go on easily and thoughtlessly to Ruin. Ten thousand Times better hear and fear, and fly from Wrath by flying from Sin to Christ, than to start back from necessary Pain now, and so plunge at last into a bottomless Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, and where the Smoke of their Torment ascends up for ever and ever. Happy you and I, if when *the Lord Jesus comes in flaming Fire to take Vengeance on them that know not God and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*, we may lift up our Heads with Safety and Joy, as he will come to glorify and *be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe**.

SECOND SON.

BUT, Sir, is not *Fire* sometimes used in Scripture metaphorically to represent the Favour of God? Was not a *burning Bush* the Token of his gracious Presence? And did he not speak compassionate Things from thence?

FATHER.

YOUR Observation is just. There have been various Manifestations of God to his ancient

* 2 Thess. i. 8, 9, 10.

People under this Emblem, of which the burning Bush was one of the most remarkable*. Perhaps he appeared by this Element to represent his Majesty, Power, and Purity; Perfections whose Honour he would by no Means lose, but have illustrated in their full Glories. But in this Case the Circumstances are adapted to the Object represented by it; I mean, the Case of *Israel* in *Egypt*. They were in great Distress, as melting Metal in the Furnace, and to an Eye of Sense in a desperate Condition, even as a Bush all on Fire soon to be turned into Ashes; yet in these Circumstances the Bush, though all in a Flame for a considerable Season, is not consumed, is not hurt or diminished. Let *Moses* know and *Israel* through him, that the People of the Lord shall not fall a Sacrifice to the Wrath of *Egypt* and its tyrannical *Monarch*, because God was with them of a Truth. Yea, thence the Lord uttereth his Voice, *I have seen, I have seen the Affliction of my People which is in Egypt, and have heard their Groaning, and am come down to deliver them* †.

ANOTHER way in which God revealed his Grace by Fire, was in *the Pillar* which attended *Israel's* Passage from *Egypt* to *Canaan* ‡. This, as it darted from Heaven, was an Evidence and

* *Exod.* iii. 2. † *Ibid.* iii. 7. ‡ *Ibid.* xiii. 21.

Representation of an heavenly Guidance. Its Appearance was various by Day and by Night. In the Day time it was a Cloud, and overshadowed the Camp, which afforded in that burning Situation a comfortable Shelter, and much mitigated the Vehemence of the Sun; in the Night it was a Flame of Fire, and directed the *Israelites* in their Journey, which in that Desert are chiefly by Night, whilst it also scattered the Darkness and Damps of the Night, and prevented the Approach of wild Beasts. Thus were they conducted where and when to march, and comforted in a howling Wilderness. And was not this designed to be a Representation of that gracious Care which the Lord undertakes to exercise towards his Covenant People in general, his spiritual *Israel* in this World? He hath graciously bestowed upon them his Word without and his Spirit within, and engages that they shall not lose their Way, for he will guide them by his Counsel in the right Way till he hath brought them to a City of Habitation. It is said concerning *Israel*, that *he took not away from them the Pillar of Cloud by Day, nor the Pillar of Fire by Night**, though they had shown themselves by various Disobedience and Rebellion very unworthy and shamefully provoking. The Language of Scripture bears a visible Reference to

* Exodus xiii. 22.

this grand Transaction, when it is promised to the New-Testament Church, *The Lord will create, upon every dwelling Place of Mount Zion, and upon her Assemblies, a Cloud and Smoke by Day, and the Shining of a flaming Fire by Night* *. i. e. In Gospel Times the Lord will bestow upon his People as real Proofs, though not such miraculous Proofs of his Care, as he did upon his Church in the Wilderness. Though Miracles are ceased, yet the Divine Providence is the same. He is the same to his People as ever. God's spiritual Church is in a travelling State still; and while so, his Eye is over it, and his Arms of Power continually surround it. It shall not be lost in a Desert. It shall not be scorched by Day, nor frozen by Night; *for the Lord God is a Sun and Shield, and no good Thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly* †.

ONCE more, *Fire was used in burning up the Sacrifices*. By this Element was the daily Victim consumed to represent the terrible Things which Christ was to undergo, when he *should appear to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself* ‡; and what so proper to represent the sharp Sorrow of Christ's human Soul as Fire, when the Tokens of the Divine Wrath seized his Spirits, and extorted the most Heart-rending Complaints?

* Isaiah iv. 5. † Psalm lxxxiv. 11. ‡ Heb. ix. 26.

But on some peculiar Occasions Fire descended as an Evidence of God's accepting the Sacrifice, and burnt it up. Thus it was when *David* offered his Sacrifice, attended with mournful Confessions of Sin, after he had numbred the People, and God had sent that terrible Plague among them *. And another memorable Instance of the same kind we have in *Elijah's* Time. When *Israel* had cast off *Jehovah* and his Worship, and had put themselves under the senseless and guilty Patronage of *Baal*, *Elijah* was willing to bring the Matter to a Trial, which was most worthy of their Worship; and *he that answered by Fire* should be acknowledged as such. This was so fair a Proposal, and this way of answering had been so long settled, that both Priest and People acquiesce in it. Now to set the Matter farthest off from Deception, the Prophet pours a large Quantity of Water all round; and yet the Fire from Heaven drank up the liquid Element and consumed the Sacrifice. This for the present seemed to confirm *Israel*, and had not an *Ahab* and a *Jezabel* shed pestilential Influence from the Throne over all the Country, one would think that *Israel* should never more have departed from God into spiritual Whoredom or Idolatry.

* 1 Chron. xxi. 26.

SECOND SON.

I REMEMBER my Elder Brother some time ago, when my good Father was speaking of Fire as making Devastations in our Streets, was pleased to observe that there was a more shocking one than these; and mentioned *the burning of Sodom*. But there is one behind more awful than any; I mean *the burning of the World itself*. I wish my Father would be so good as to give us the best Description he can of that most solemn and tremendous Event.

FATHER.

How the World was destroyed in *Noah's* Time Revelation hath informed us. Then the Heavens above and the Earth beneath gave up all their Stores of Water to fulfil the great, the dread Decree. But as every Element is in the Almighty's Hand, and at his Disposal, so this of Fire shall be the Executioner of his awful Vengeance hereafter. *When* it shall be accomplished is a Secret to all but to him who orders the Event. But it cannot be till all his Promises are fulfilled in Favour of his People and Church to which they relate, and for the Sake of whom the World stands. *How* it shall be effected, whether by some *immediate* and *extraordinary* Interposition of the Divine Power,

or by infinite Wisdom and Power causing some *natural Cause* to operate like the Springing of a Mine in the very Juncture of Time, when most needed, it may be thought by some vain and presumptuous to enquire; while others esteem it not only allowable, but imagine the Enquiry may subserve very valuable Purposes.

It may be effected by the central Fire breaking forth, the Matter of it being made more inflammable, or its Intensity increased, or the Resistance of the imprisoning Earth being lessened. But this dire Catastrophe may be more easily accounted for by the Approach of a Comet. Suppose it to be such a one as appeared in 1680, of which Mr. *Whiston* gives this Account, “ that
 “ it came to its *Perihelium* December 8 at Noon,
 “ within 496000 Miles of the Sun’s Center, at
 “ which time it sustained a Degree of Heat
 “ near 2000 times as intense as red hot Iron.
 “ Its Tail after its *Perihelium* was 80 Millions
 “ of Miles long. Its Period is 575 Years.”
 Now since the Orbit or Passage of the Comet is cross the Path of the Earth, suppose such a Comet, after it had imbibed such a stupendous Quantity of Heat, should, in its Retirement from the Sun at its descending Node, happen to meet the Earth in its Passage, must it not be soon burnt

burnt up to a Cinder? And what is impossible in this? For another Philosopher alarms us by saying, "That by his Computations he found that " *November* the 11th, this very Comet was not " above one Semidiameter of the Earth from " the Earth's Way." Suppose again that the Comet had been so near the Earth's Way one Month's Time after its so near Approach to the Sun, and that the Earth had been passing there, how could the Earth have survived such an Approach? But whether the last Conflagration will be by this Method or not I do not presume to say. We must leave impenetrable Futurity to him whose Ways are past finding out. The Apostle *Peter* assures us the Dissolution of the World will be by Fire, and dwells upon the solemn Thought in the 7th, 10th, and 12th Verses of the third Chapter of the Second Epistle. Some have thought that this Earth at that Day may be entirely destroyed. Some that the Cortex or external Part only will be so burnt as to lose indeed its outward Form, but then that from the Ruins or Rubbish of the Globe, the Divine Being may raise another beautiful Fabrick, and that all the sad Flaws introduced by Sin will be visible no more, nor guilty Man, as the Offspring of rebellious *Adam*, be any more its Inhabitant. Then, every Fruit of Sin being re-

moved, nothing remains but a new Heaven and a new Earth, wherein dwelleth Righteousness. But, whatever is the Method of it, let us stop our Thoughts a while on the Conflagration itself.

O MY Children, what a Day, what an Event will this be ? What Amazement will it produce ? No previous Notice will be given ! “ *Behold I come as a Thief.* ” And as the *Lighning which cometh out of the East, immediately shineth to the uttermost Extent westward*, so instantaneous will this Conflagration be. As it was before the Flood and at the burning of *Sodom*, so we are told it will be when Omnipotence kindles this devouring Fire. All Serenity and Peace before : the World buried in secure Stupidity ! Every Fear hush’d in Silence, or rather unknown, and every Distress lost in Airs of Gladness. Balls and Assemblies, Plays and Operas, Concerts and Masquerades (the guilty Contrivances of carnal Wisdom and a wicked Heart) as frequent as ever, Schemes for Trade pursued, Factories set up, Companies established, buying and selling, building, planting, marrying and giving in Marriage just as before. Thus the unbelieving World will too much resemble *Belshazzar’s Court*, all Festivity now, and in a few Hours all Mourning, Lamentation, and Woe. But let this Thought
mortify

mortify us to this World and its Possessions now !
Use this World as not abusing it, for the Fashion of it passeth away. Awful Thought ! This beautiful Estate, those Gardens laid out with so much Art and Elegance, planted, watered, decorated and embordered with so much Care and Expence, what are they the first Hour they feel the fatal Fire ? And must the impregnable Castle, the Boast of Kings, be storm'd by this Enemy ? See ! its Stones dissolve, its proud Fortifications vanish as Stubble consumed ! No more I look for the curious Workmanship of the imperial Palace ; 'tis mingled in the same Flame with the Peasant's Cottage ? This Fire pays no Respect to the Work of Ages, and scorns the Ingenuity of the Carver, the Painter, and Gilder. See the venerable Fruits of hoary Time, of assiduous Labour and immense Treasure, are lost at once. In vain those fine Porphyry Pillars the Wonder of so many Centuries plead their Polish, Elegance, and Solidity. This Fire dissolves their Contexture, and crumbles them in Dust. No more I'll name *Cartoons*, those invaluable Portraits, the Admiration of succeeding Artists ; or speak of Statues which seem to breathe, or to be ready to speak, or even now speaking nervously by their expressive Features and Attitudes ! O, no ! the Crown itself with all its Jewels, the
royal

royal Robe, the Sceptre, the Sword hid in an embroider'd Scabbard, must melt and be no more. Nor let it be thought strange or inequitable, that what was brought in by Sin, and so made subject to Vanity, should pass through a Fire of Purification ! And perhaps if this World is repaired, re-edified, and afresh replenished with rational Inhabitants after the Conflagration, it may, thro' angelick Tradition, be one Part of its History, that a tall Archangel rebelling against God poisoned the World by Sin ; and that the Venom was so malignant, that, after it had stood 6 or 7000 Years under the Favour of divine Forbearance, and after the blessed God had separated a Number by Grace, and sent his Son to redeem and his Spirit to sanctify them, he thought proper to dissolve its Frame by Fire, that he might raise to himself a more glorious Earth without Spot or Blemish. This is a World, may they then cry out, whence every thing is banished that dishonours God, that defiles the Soul, or afflicts the Body. No Thorn grows now in our Path to wound the Feet, no Poison is hid near our Food, no Inclemency in our Air, no Rebellion or Hostility in the Beasts beneath us, no Feuds and Animosities amongst rational Beings, nothing that contradicts the divine Will ; but it is now a World in which
dwelleth

dwelleth Righteousness. But not to lead you too far into the Regions of Conjecture I add no more, having finished what I designed.

UPON this the Family stood up, and united in duteous Thanks for the great Pains their Father had taken to enlarge their Ideas and profit their Souls.



The Eighth Dialogue.

FATHER.

AFTER a dark, cold, and stormy Winter, how pleasant is the returning Spring? Its Light is transportingly sweet, and the Rays of a vernal Sun are peculiarly balsamick. The Efforts of opening Nature in the Trees around us, and the Earth beneath our Feet, how entertaining to the Eye! Now the Noon-day Beams are become more vertical! Every Field presents a charming Landscape to the Eye, and a Nofegay to the Smell; yea, every Bird almost offers you a Song, whether its harsher Voice or softer Note sound it in your Ears. How chearful an Air does the tuneful Linnet assume while, hopping from Spray to Spray, it pours forth its Harmony, and again swells its Throat with Music, as if eager to perform in the most masterly Manner to the Approbation and Delight of his Creator and Man his Vicegerent? If we pass to the Streams, the Fish, which through the Winter sunk to the
Bottom

Bottom in Indolence, and as if bechill'd with cold, rise towards the Surface of the Current, practice their former Agility, and sport themselves in Motions peculiarly soft, easy, and graceful to attract and entertain the Eye,

THUS, my Children, does the Christian find it, when after uncomfortable Withdrawments, the Lord is pleased to approach his Soul and revisit him with his Salvation. There are in the Life of God's People dark Nights and lightsome Days. If the former continue long, may I not call them a Winter Season? the Powers of the Soul are dark and benumb'd, almost motionless and very uncomfortable! By these Means the Christian is troubled, made more feelingly sensible than before that his Dependance is entirely upon his God and Redeemer; that he is not, with all his former Stock of Gifts and Graces sufficient for any thing as of himself; and that the vegetable World does not stand more in need of the natural Sun, than his Soul does of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. But the Lord in this Case returns to shew that he hath a Method of paying gracious Visits to the Souls of his People, of communicating instructive Light and quickning Grace, and giving those Views of his Love which are truly satisfactory. How affectionate is a Father's Aspect? How ravishing

visiting his Smile? And how tenderly, dutifully, and honourably does the believing Soul embrace and welcome him? Holiness and Joy go Hand in Hand, and unite their triumphant Powers in him. The World is treated with the Contempt it deserves; and he longs after that World of which this Experience is but the Foretaste and the Earnest. He would have it so always with him; fain would he continue on this Mount of Transfiguration, for he says, *it is good to be here.* But, for wise and holy Reasons, there are Ebbs and Flows in the Christian's spiritual Comfort; and this causes the Christian to say, with Dr. Watts,

He shines, and I am all Delight;
 He hides, and all is Pain;
 When will he fix me in his Sight,
 And ne'er depart again?

BUT I am wandering in this contemplative Path beyond what I intended. However, know that though these Joys are *Realities* and not the Dreams of Enthusiasm, yet that they are to be attained only in the Path of Holiness. They are the Experience chiefly of those few who enter *indeed* into the divine Life, walk closely with the Lord in it, and retire often into *Solitude* from the Noise of the World, and the babbling Impertinences of Sense. Here, as in some consecrated

crated Bower, the choice Christian much dwells. Here *Religion* spreads her Table, brings forth her noblest Rarities, and regales her Votaries with Joys untasted before. Here she feeds them with her hidden Manna and Wine upon the Lees well refined. In this Shade Religion admirably thrives, and to these sequester'd Stations I would recommend you often to retire. Here sacred *Contemplation* presents a *Telescope* by which the most distant Objects are discerned and brought near, and a *Mirror* in which all Things are represented as they really are, without any Disguise or false Colouring; whilst at the same time she offers a Water clear as Chrystal, which hath a peculiar Virtue to cleanse the Eye from that Dust and Smoke, which, in the Midst of the World, it is apt to contract. Here it is that the Word of God opens itself most readily to the enquiring Heir of Glory; here also the Book of Nature unfolds its striking Beauties to direct the enlightned Eye to Him that created, disposed, and upholdeth all Things. While all the varied Objects of *this Garden* are transiently observed, they can yield but a transient Entertainment; but on the other Hand, what is there which will not yield sweet Satisfaction and solid Instruction to the Soul which is fixedly attentive? But I am now silent.

ELDEST

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

AMIDST the continued Silence of this Company I may be thought impertinent to break it; but as I speak to beg Information, the most ignorant have a Title to take the Lead, and under that Character I address myself. Among all the Wonders around me in this Garden, none, I think, impress me more than *those Bees*. I see what surprizes in them; but there are many Things relating to them which I don't know the Meaning of, and should be glad therefore if you, Sir, or any of my Brothers, would be so good as to instruct me. It is no Virtue not to own that I am no Adept in Nature's School; but since I began to seek after Knowledge, I think of it in a Way different to what I did before. Ignorance is now my deep Regret, especially when I consider what Knowledge I might have attained. Since then I began late, and my Opportunities are not like those of your Sex, it will be an Act of peculiar Charity to feed my Mind, and all the Powers of my Soul, and I hope I shall not be inattentive, nor will all your Labour be totally lost.

I WOULD beg Leave to propose a Difficulty. What should be the Meaning that we do not read of *Bees* in Scripture? The divine Spirit speaking there sends us to the *Ox* and *Ass* for
Instruc-

Instruction and Correction in Righteousness ; and again, to the *Stork*, and the *Crane*, and the *Swallows*, &c. *Solomon* particularly sends the Sluggard to the *Ant*, to consider her Ways and be wise. I would fain know *why not to the Bee?* Methinks Bees are a prettier and more express Emblem of what *Solomon* would represent. Had *Bees* not been known, I should not have wondered ; but my Surprise increaseth, when I know that the Land of *Canaan* was a Land flowing with Milk and Honey.

FATHER.

YOUR Question is by no means impertinent. As the Word in the *Hebrew* is found but in one Place more it may not be so easy to fix the precise Meaning. Some are of Opinion that the Word signifies *Insects* in general, and the *Ant* being a remarkable one for Industry and Carefulness, that was fixed upon ; but in the Description there is nothing that may not be accommodated to the *Bee* ; perhaps most Particulars mentioned belong to it in a preferable Sense and higher Degree. Nor is it easy to imagine, as you observe, that when this Insect must be known to every one, and the Spirit of God for the most part borrows his Emblems from Objects which are common, that *Solomon* should not send the Sluggard to the Bee for his Tutor which was

not only well known, but as we imagine as diligent, and more ingenious than the Ant. But this is no more than a Point of Curiosity.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

I TREAT it as such. But pray, Sir, what is Honey?

FATHER.

HONEY is a Liquid or Confection extracted by the Bees from Flowers and other Vegetables of a sweet Nature, and laid up in their Combs or Cells for their present and future food. Some of this delicious Juice lies upon the Surface, and some at the Bottom of the Flowers very deep. Nature therefore hath provided the Bees with long Trunks, by the Means of which they can search to the very Bottom. These Instruments for collecting are very taper, so as to enter the narrowest Aperture, and very flexible, so as not to injure themselves nor the tender Flower they visit and dwell upon. What they gather is transmitted into a Vesicle prepared for that Purpose; when it is full, they know it is high time to return to their own Home; there they disburthen themselves into the Cell provided for the common Benefit of the Family; and thus, while they procure a Maintenance for themselves, they are always adding to the Stock of the Community.

WHE-

WHETHER the Honey is afterwards made or only gathered by the Bee, is a Question among Philosophers ; perhaps what they collect may *all* undergo some Concoction, yet possibly *some* may need very little. And indeed the Quantity that at special Times they are able to add to the publick Stock evidences that if it is necessary to the Bees to give what they gather a sort of Digestion in the Stomach, it must soon undergo the Change requisite, as Persons have known by weighing them at various Times with *Stilliards*. As far as appears *Honey* was the Sugar of the Ancients, and so it continued till first from the *East-Indies*, then the *West*, the Cane was found to contain a sweet Juice, which properly boiled and grained, makes what we call Sugar. There were four or five Things that were the staple Commodities of the Land of *Canaan* which she sold to her Neighbours, and *this was one*. While *Tyre*, that was only a Merchant, trafficked with all the World for Rarities, and bought of every one according to their Productions of *Nature* or *Art*, we find she bought of the *Jews* *Wheat, Honey, Oil,* and *Balm*.*

THIS *Sweetness* which is in Honey is used by the Spirit of God as an Emblem to represent the sacred Pleasure which the Saints have often found

* Ezekiel xxvii. 17.

in conversing with the *Holy Scriptures*, and those glorious Truths which are contained in them. Yea, mental Pleasure in general is represented by the Sweetness of Honey : *pleasant Words are as a Honey-comb, sweet to the Soul, and Health to the Bones* *. *Thy Lips, O my Spouse, drop as the Honey-comb* †. And well may the People of God, who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, rejoice in the Testimonies of his Grace ! These are a Light shining in a dark Place, directing their Feet, which before wandred, into the Way of Peace ; and shall they not then rejoice in these blest Openings of Glory and Grace upon them ? Are not the Promises of the Word the Charter of their Privileges ? And can they be unfeeling to the tender Sensations of their Maker's Love, when in the Promise and its Application they hear God assuring them, “ *I will be a Father to you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters* ? ” and “ *I am the Lord Almighty* . ” Is it not hence that they are perswaded and assured that it shall be for ever well with them, as they have the Promises of eternal Life ? Did *David* tune his Harp to Strains of heavenly Joy on this Account under the Old Testament's darker Administration ? and shall not we much more ? O for the Experience of his Divine Relish ! that thus from an Heart attuned to his we may use his Language,

* Prov. xvi. 24. † Cant. iv. 11.

How sweet are thy Words unto my Taste, sweeter than Honey to my Mouth *. In another Place the same inspired Writer prefers these divine Oracles both to Riches and Pleasure: *more to be desired, says he, are they than Gold; sweeter also than Honey and the Honey-comb* †. But what is all this to a carnal Appetite? Such a full Soul that never saw or felt Want, that never hungred or thirsted after Righteousness, such a one will never relish the Doctrines of Grace, the spiritual Food and the Bread of Life that come down from Heaven, or give a cordial Welcome to the Offers of Salvation, Pardon, and Holiness! What are the Promises of the Gospel to him who thinks himself rich already, and to have need of nothing? What is the Proposal and Settlement of spiritual Good to one who can taste nothing beyond fleshly Accommodations? What are eternal Blessings to him who only looks to the Things which are seen and temporal? Such a full Soul as this will loathe the Honey-comb, that Treasure and Quintessence of divine Sweetness ‡. But as I have often, my dear Children, imparted to you what I found pleasant to my own Soul, and fed you chearfully with what was relishable to myself, I would now recommend to you the Study of God's Word with the devoutest Meditation.

* Psalm cxix. 103.

† Psalm xix. 10.

‡ Prov. xxvii. 7.

However noble and exalted its Doctrines are, they cannot save you as a Charm, or operate at a Distance ; but its Declarations, Commands, and Promises will penetrate, possess, and raise you to Heaven by the frequent Contemplation of them, and by tracing the Assurances of the divine Veracity that its Glories are and shall be yours. Here you will not be in danger of surfeiting. I may therefore say to you, “ *My Son, eat thou Honey, because it is good; and the Honey-comb, which is sweet to thy taste; so shall the Knowledge of Wisdom be to thy Soul, when thou hast found it*.*”

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

WE read in Scripture of *eating the Word*. *Thy Word was found, and I did eat it†.* And again it is said, *As new born Babies desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby‡.* Pray, Sir, explain the Metaphor.

FATHER.

THE Resemblance here is very close and striking. Every one knows what it is to desire his Food when hungry, to eat it, to relish it, and be nourish'd by it. Thus the Soul, sensible of its Wants, hungers and thirsts after the great

* Prov. xxiv. 13, 14.

† Jer. xv. 16.

‡ 1 Peter ii. 2, 3.

Things contained in the Word. Nothing can satisfy the awakened Sinner but an Interest in the Righteousness and Grace, the Power and Promises of Christ. Nothing but the divine Perfections and invariable Allsufficiency of Jehovah. How happy does such a Sinner esteem those who can honourably lay claim to these? and when he can apply the great Things of the Gospel to himself, then he eats them indeed. By Faith mingled with the Precepts, Promises, and Threatnings of the Word, he feeds upon them, and they, as Food, do him good; they are Health to his Soul. He believes that the Scriptures are no cunningly devised Fables, but Oracles of Truth, and the Words of One who is faithful and powerful, who will certainly make them good; in fine, that they are Words by which he may be saved. And the Truths of God carry in them a Sweetness in proportion to the prior Sense the Sinner had of the Importance and Want of them. They are refreshing as a Director and Guide to the Traveller that had lost his Way upon the dark, rocky, dangerous Mountains; salutary as the Prescription of an able Physician that can and will cure the Patient sick unto Death; sweet as the Method of obtaining a Pardon to the Malefactor condemned; and pleasant as a cheerful Companion to talk with in a Season of Solitude. Oh! my Children, seek after, cry for a sacred

Relish of these heavenly Themes! The best Food is nauseated by the Man who is under the Power of a prevailing Sickness. Even a well-spread Table, which is the Joy of the Healthy and Hungry, is the Object of the sick Man's Distaste; the Sight is disagreeable, and the Smell cannot be endured. But when you are indeed made sensible of Sin and Danger, when Guilt and Pollution burden the Soul, when at such a Time the Gospel brings the good News of Salvation, then you are likely to *taste* that the Lord is gracious. When a Sinner hath been shuddering with fear of the Wrath of God Almighty, when upon the Brink of the Precipice he hath looked over, and turning his Eye with Amazement cry'd out, "*Who can dwell with those devouring Flames, those everlasting Burnings;*" then, I say, then, and perhaps never till then, the suitable and gracious Invitation of the Word of *Jesus* hath been sweet as Honey, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* *. When the Sinner hath been parched with Heat, through the Arrows of the Almighty which have entered his Heart, and the *Poison of which has drank up his Spirits*, then how delightful to hear the Redeemer crying with a loud Voice, *If any Man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink* † ?

* Matth. xi. 28.

† St. John vii. 37.

SECOND SON.

I SOME Time ago met with a Piece of *Honey-comb* empty, which I suppose had been filled by the Bees, but was gradually discharged of its Contents: I laid it up, and it is near at Hand. I admired it much, and I thought it a Pity wantonly to demolish so curious a Piece of Workmanship; a Fabrick which it might have puzzled all the rational Artificers of our Globe to have erected. I observe it is an *Hexagon*; and this, they who are conversant with Mechanicks tell us, is a Form that in the same Compass is best adapted to take the greatest Number of Cells, with the least Space lost. Now that every Cell should be the same, and all adapted to one another in so exact and regular a way is truly wonderful. I am ready to ask of whom and where did they learn such Ingenuity? No Guide or Master, save him who guides the various Orbs of Heaven.

FATHER.

TRUE, Son! and if so, is not here a constant Exertion of the divine Wisdom and Power? How immediate the Impression? Methinks I can as soon imagine that a fine Impression upon Sealing-wax, or a Coat of Arms, was stamp'd by the rude Foot of a Rustick, as imagine that the Hand of God is not concerned in every Cell
that

that is erected. Here let us behold, admire, and adore the Footsteps of Deity.

LEARN of the *Bees*, my Children, to be *ingenious*, yea, be ambitious to do every thing as much as may be to perfection. They don't think it sufficient to build even in this uniform way, but they perform their Work with singular Neatness. This puts me in mind of their *Hebrew Name* (*Deborah**) which seems to be derived from a Root which signifies a *Work*; or to speak the Truth, it almost equally signifies a *Word* or *Work*. Some therefore would have the *Bee* called (*Deborah*) from that *Humming* with which she plies her Work, especially at certain Seasons; but I think the peculiar Elegance of her Work is more remarkable than her chearful Loquacity, and consequently that she derives her Name from that Ingenuity of which the Combs are a striking Instance. It is the same Name by which she is called *who* judged *Israel* in the Time of *Barak*; and though a Name of *Talkativeness* may well suit many of her Sex, yet as no one cares for a Name expressive of this and nothing else, be it remembered she was eminent in her Station both in *Word* and *Deed*.

דְּבוֹרָה *

BUT

BUT to proceed to the Works of the Bee. When the Cell is built, it is the Business of some to go over the Work before it is dry. They smooth the Surface of every Wall, remove any little Rubbish that attended the Work, see whether the Angles are exact, and adjust every thing to the Neatness in which we behold it. The Lesson which you should learn hence is to excel in every thing laudable, and which is properly *your Business*. Are any of you Scholars? Acquaint yourselves as much as may be with all Sorts of Learning. Every Branch of Literature that you enter upon endeavour to search to the Bottom, and make yourselves Masters of it, especially of those Parts which peculiarly relate to your Employ. And others of you, whether Sons or Daughters, be gloriously dissatisfied with ordinary Attainments. Thus by exerting your rational Powers in order to excel you will come to be more useful in your Places, you will be more acceptable to those you have Connections with, and improve those Talents with which Providence hath favour'd you. But amidst all your Ambition to excel dread to fall beneath that which is the Prerogative of a rational, and the Character of a happy Creature, even to aim at the Glory of God in all.

ELDEST

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

BUT many a one is ingenious, and yet is neither useful or agreeable ; neither a Friend to himself, or those about him.

FATHER.

No doubt but *Diligence* must go along with Ingenuity ; and without this the Bees would make no better a Figure among the Insects than their Neighbours. But of this they are an uncommon, not to say an unequall'd Example. Go to the *Bee*, if thou art a Sluggard, and consider her indefatigable Labours. They tell us that the Parent Bees soon inure their young ones to work, and that they are obsequious to the parental Controul. When the Infant-Bees come out of their Cells where they were bred, they, like Children, flutter about with Gaiety ; they frisk here and there as if made only for play ; nay, by their youthful Impertinencies, they break in upon their Elders, and incommode them in their Work. The Seniors prudently indulge them, or overlook their Folly for a small Season, but won't bear long ; for in a few Days they humble them down perhaps with Correction, and set them to work, and the young Scholars soon accommodate themselves to the Will of their Governors, and begin to labour. First they are employed upon *under* Works, and, like other

common Day-labourers, attemper the Cement, and serve the more ingenious Builders till they have learned themselves, and gradually enter upon more delicate Services. This is the Account that has been given of the Bees, and that they are peculiarly industrious afterwards is apparent to every Eye that surveys them. How soon do they venture out when the Winter Season is gone, even while they are in danger of bechilling their tender Constitutions, and benumbing their feeble Limbs? If the Rays of the Sun have not as yet sufficiently concocted the springing Herbs and opening Flowers, so as that they may extract Honey, yet they gather something which is needful for their Subsistence. But their Diligence apparently improves with the Spring and Summer. When Storms arise and Rains fall, and oblige them to keep at home, how eagerly do they watch the Weather, so as to be upon the Wing directly when the Season will permit! And as Nature hath provided them with proper Implements with which to work, they do not bear them in vain.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

I AM impatient to know what are those Implements.

FATHER.

FATHER.

As much of what they want lies upon the Superficies of the Flowers, they are provided with Paws, at the End of which are formed little Sickles, I think two upon each, and with these they dextrously scrape together the fine Particles they collect. And that these fine Instruments may not be incommoded or blunted, or entangle them in their Walk, they tell us that they are wrapt up, when they are not employed, with little Balls of Sponge. With these and their Trunks mentioned before, so well adapted to the scooping of the Inside of Flowers, they marvelously exercise their Diligence.

IN building their Cells they are so *indefatigable*, that some say they are able to erect a Set of Combs in 24 Hours fit to entertain no less than 3000 Bees. Indeed they are never idle. When there is but little to be got that can add to their Store they do what they can. But when the Honey Dews fall, which seem to be Honey half made, how unremitting and busy is their Industry? They do not give themselves that Repose by Night which they before allowed themselves; and those Gentlemen, who have by Stilliards poised their Hives before and after such Seasons, give amazing Accounts of their Increase of Weight in a few Days.

HERE,

HERE, my Children, let me make a Pause, not barely to admire the Activity of these little Creatures, but more especially to excite you to a proportional Emulation. O what are your Incentives to Diligence ! You have *Souls* to labour for, which are inestimable in their Nature, immortal in their Duration, and Heirs of inconceivable Joys or Sorrows. How diligent ought each of you to be to escape what is ruinous and destructive, more especially what is so to the Soul, and what will plunge it in total and irreparable Perdition. O my Children, what will excite to active Industry, if Heaven and all its Glories, its Honours, Pleasures, and Beauties, its Perfection of Light, Liberty, and Holiness will not do it ? especially considering that the Fruit of our Industry in working out of our Salvation is not for a few Days or Years, but for the interminable Duration of everlasting Ages. The Bee gathers Honey not for itself, but for Man his Lord ; but if we are wise, we shall be wise for ourselves, and gather Fruit unto eternal Life.— So *He* has appointed *who* has connected Holiness and Happiness together as close as the Root and the Branch, or the Fountain and the Stream that issues from it. Does spiritual Sloth then at any Time creep on you ? Does the Sun-shine of carnal Prosperity enervate your practical Powers, and incline you to slumber ? Stir up yourselves speedily,

dily, cry for quickning Grace, yea, and shame yourselves out of your Torpor, by observing the Vigor of the Men of the World in the Pursuit of their Vanities, their Uncertainties, their Things of nought, Things which cannot profit them. If no Pains are thought too much by the Merchant and Mariner while plowing the foaming Seas, and visiting foreign Suns and their intemperate Climates; if no Pains are thought too much by the Soldier while exposed to all the Hardships and dreadful Dangers of the Field, and by those in common and inferior Life to procure a low Maintainance, or to add to their little Stock of worldly Goods, to enable the to make a more shining Figure among their Fellow Worms, or to subsist and surfeit upon the Sweets of Life hereafter in the Winter of old Age, shall not we as Christians be much more vigorous, when the Prize for which we run is Salvation, with eternal Glory, the Joys of Angels, and the Pleasures which grow eternally on the Tree of Life in the Midst of the Paradise of God? Oh! my dear Hopes and Cares, be not slothful in your worldly Business, but in the Places, the Stations and the Businesses to which you are allotted, therein abide with God. Fill up your Relations for his Honour and the Welfare of your Fellow-Immortals. While you are young, and have a Talent intrusted to you by God and myself.

self, endeavour by Industry to add to your Stock,* that you may be more extensively useful in your Day, remembering what *Solomon* says, *Seest thou a Man diligent in his Business, he shall stand before Kings, and not before mean Men* *. Especially be diligent in those Things which immediately relate to the Glory of *Him* to whom you owe your All, and where that Interest of yours is concerned which will abide for ever. If the Trifles of Sense interpose, say, “ *I am doing a great Work, why should the Work cease while I leave it and come down to you ?* ” If Temptations to Negligence arise from many supposed Days to come, answer with our Lord, “ *I must work the Work of him that sent me while it is Day, for the Night cometh in which no Man can work.* ” Act Faith upon the Eye of him who appointed you your Work, and directed you how to do it. Recollect most seriously and frequently that he ever observes you now, and will judge you hereafter. If you are vigorous and constant in proportion to these Considerations, *what Manner of Persons will you be ?* And since you look for these Things, be diligent that you may be found of him in Peace without Spot and Blemish. Yea, I exhort you in the Apostle’s Words, “ *Give Diligence for the attaining of a full Assurance of Hope to the End, that you be not slothful, but*

* Prov. xxii. 29.

*" Followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises * ;"* especially as a wintry Season of Afflictions and old Age is approaching, which will benumb your Powers, and finally seal up all in Death.

SECOND SON.

SIR, we are much obliged to you for drawing forth the Instruction given us by the Irrationals, and pressing this most necessary Article of Christian Diligence. Nothing can be more evident than the Effects of Diligence in this little Commonwealth of Bees; hence they derive their Prosperity. And nothing can be more apparent than the sad Effects of natural and spiritual Sloth in this World. *Drowsiness cloaths a Man with Rags*, both Body and Soul. *" He grows poor for this World and another, that dealeth with a slack Hand, but the Hand of the Diligent maketh rich."* If any more Observations occur to your Thoughts on this Head we shall be thankful to hear them.

FATHER.

IF our Time would permit I have something more to add, but you hear we are called away, and therefore must leave these pretty Instructors for the present.

* Heb. vi. 11, 12.



The Ninth Dialogue.

SECOND SON.

AS the Showers are gone, and the Clouds which lately lowered around us have resigned their Reins of Government to the golden Beams of Day, I would humbly request, Sir, that you would favour us with another Walk into the Garden. The Weather promises us Delight, and from another Source I expect yet greater Satisfaction, as you had not Time to finish what you began. If I may estimate the Sentiments of others from my own, we parted with Reluctance before, and shall come together now with a pleasing Expectation of hearing something more of that Tribe of Insects, which has been the Wonder and Delight of inquisitive Philosophers, and from whose Manners you have derived to us so many Points of solid Instruction and weighty Exhortation.

N 2

FATHER.

FATHER.

I AM ready to adjourn as you propose, and immediately to begin where I left off a few Days ago. What I intended next to have dwelt upon was the *Harmony* which is apparent among the Bees, and their mutual Readiness to help in the Course of their Labour. This, no doubt, tends with other Things to their Prosperity. They who have favoured the World with their Observations on this Subject tell us that when they come home laden with Materials for building, they are no sooner arrived but others of their Brethren are ready to disburthen them, and condescend to brush their Friends Feet for them. The Carriers go out again, while they who are left at home take the Materials, and knead the little Balls over and over ; and thus of various Colours, and various Consistences too, they make one uniform Mass fit for building. Such is the Harmony which reigns to advance the publick Works, and add to the common Stores ; and others who are not immediately employ'd attend them with their good Offices ; particularly, while some are deeply engaged in carrying on the Building, others come and bring them Food, that the Work may proceed, and the Operators may not want in the mean Time. It seems one don't scruple to finish what another has begun. Perhaps some may have a better

Hand at polishing, or else, according to an establish'd Rule, it may be their allotted Employments that Day to polish and do nothing else: accordingly with their Mouths and Paws they smooth over the Walls, and then draw over them the Extremity of their Bodies, to compress every thing in its proper Place. And if you, my dear Children, may indeed learn *Harmony* from these comparatively despicable Insects, how shall I as a Father and you as Brethren rejoice? We are all made for Society, and there is a loud Call for Harmony. Are you engaged with others in Business civil or religious? Act your Part faithfully for the Good of the Whole. Be ready to bear your Share of the Burden, and, should there be occasion, participate of the Burden of others, if there should be a Failure on their Side, either through Negligence or Moroseness. Consult with them freely. Let not Pride or Indolence make you stiffly maintain the Barriers of your own Province, and indulge no ill-natur'd Jealousies as if afraid of doing too much for your Brother or the Publick; but think it your Honour and Privilege, if you have a greater Capacity, and are enabled to exert yourselves with more Vigor or Influence than others, for every Thing of this kind is a Talent, and must not be hid or suffered to rust. Without a Harmony in its Powers, what would the *human Animal Economy*

mony be? The Body without it cannot exist, cannot exert itself, much less can there be the Enjoyment of Health. The Solids and Fluids must harmoniously act. When the Arteries have dispersed the Blood through the Whole, the Veins must bring it back again regularly to the Fountain. If the Veins throw in too fast upon the Heart, it may be drowned; and on the contrary, if there is not Work for the Heart to do, it may stand still and move no more. If the Feet will not stir to fetch the Food, or the Hand will not labour for it, if the Grinders will not macerate it, or the Stomach digest it, or the Lacteals receive it, or the Lymphaticks moisten it, or if any one Part refuse to perform its Office, the Person dies either by Inanition or Repletion. Again, if every Part hath not its proper Proportion of Nourishment in the general Distribution of Food from the Stomach, or rather of Blood from the Heart, the Consequence must be, that the Part not supplied will be emaciated. If it is an Hand, it will not be able to labour; if a Foot, the whole Body will be lame; if the Head or any of the Vitals, a sudden Death, or Phrenzy, or Melancholy, or something very grievous, must be the Consequence. Nor is this Argument ever stronger than when a Father uses it to his Children; and if near Relation, fraternal Affection and Union of Interests, do not operate to promote

promote Harmony, what will, what can produce it? Especially let the Children of God (and I hope you are such) cultivate Harmony, as begotten by the same Grace, animated by the same Spirit, the Disciples of the same Jesus, and hasting to the same Country, which is a Land of perfect and eternal Love and Harmony. Methinks Christians should ever love as Brethren, and join Heart and Hand to promote their Lord's Kingdom. Methinks there should be no Contention among *them*, but who should love Christ and one another most. O that whatever breaks in upon Christian Harmony was banished for ever from every pious Breast, and from the whole Church of Christ! O that Humility, Meekness, and mutual Affection, expelling Self-love, jarring Interests, Envy, Malice, and Uncharitableness, were the predominant and the sole Aim of those Hearts that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, or in Profession make up the Body of our divine Immanuel. O that the Church under the Gospel might be of one Heart and one Soul, and so might present to view on Earth a lively Emblem of Heaven!

NEAR akin to this Harmony is that *Public-spiritedness* which is so remarkable among the Bees. The Riches of the whole Commonwealth are the Riches of Individuals. This numerous

Republick is all *one Family*. Here is no personal Avarice, nor consequent Robbery committed on a neighbouring Cell, to hide its sweet Contents in their own. Neither are there any unnatural Combinations, so that this Comb or this Set of Combs should draw out their Forces to fight their Fellow-Bees. No Wars are here declared on this Account; there are no Acts of royal Authority to restrain or punish Theft or Disobedience, or a narrow-spirited Disrespect to the publick Weal. Here every one looks upon himself as the Servant of the Publick, and every one's daily Labour is employ'd for the general Good. Let self-interested Ministers of State come hither, and learn, and having learnt, reform. Let others look into these Colonies and blush at their own contrary Behaviour, Wretched Members of Society, to grow rich at the Expence of the Publick! to glut themselves with the Treasures of their Country! Unhappy that Nation that hath such at the Helm, who are Patriots in Name, but Savages in their Disposition. Such will loudly exclaim against Bribery and Corruption, Places and Pensions, that they may more artfully plunder, and under Disguise fill the Places of Profit and Trust with their own Creatures, and thus raise their Families. I consider them as monstrous Wens on the Body Politick, which draw too much of the animal Juices to themselves, and

and are at the same Time a dead Weight upon the Whole, and ought to be extirpated. But I feel myself grow warm, and therefore check myself, though, if I mistake not, it is on a proper Occasion, and from an honest Resentment. I would only add, that there are no Bees which load themselves with *Superfluities*, while others are left destitute of *Necessaries*; nor are there any who, having already more Honey than they can eat through the Winter, are racking their Invention to get more; nor are there any who, through excessive Care, Fatigue, and Vexation, cannot enjoy the present Stores, in their Eagerness to procure more. Such Absurdities (the Badges of our inverted or abused Rationality) are peculiar to the human Species, who value themselves upon their Wisdom, and yet make a Prey of the inoffensive and useful Members of Society.

SECOND SON.

I THANK you, dear Sir, for introducing us into this most agreeable School. How pleasing the Lessons we hear? how silently taught? yet how strongly inculcated? and how profitable, if properly attended to? How vocal is all Nature with its Creator's Praise! and how clear and interesting the Instructions which shine forth to *Man* from all his various Works! Methinks our
present

present Employment, though humble, while we are thus looking into a Bee-hive, is more useful than gazing upon the Stars themselves, though we could call them all by Name, if we went no farther than Speculation. I know, Sir, your invariable Aim is to make us better Men and Women, and more useful to Society, and to lead us into all those Paths which are right in themselves and comfortable to ourselves, and in these Points I hope we shall go out of the Garden wiser and better than we entered. Is there any Thing else, Sir, that you would kindly remark to us from these little Creatures?

FATHER.

YES; I should think myself greatly wanting if I omitted the *Frugality* of the Bees. They waste nothing, and with Care lay by and lay up every Thing which they have no Occasion for at present, but which may be profitable hereafter. They who have observed them with close Attention assure us that in the Winter when they are to open a Cell of Honey by taking off its waxen Head, they don't throw it away, but carefully bear it to the Magazine of the Publick. And when young Bees free themselves from their Places of Confinement, the old Bees come and survey the Spot, repair the Ledge which was damaged, and then carry the Remains to the general

ral Repository. This Doctrine of Frugality is very important to all, especially to you, my dear young ones. It is not the Hand of the Diligent which will make rich, unless *Oeconomy* lend her daily Hand with *Industry*. Though you gained a thousand Times more than you do, yet if your Expences are in the same Proportion, no one will pronounce you a Gainer. I do not plead for a contracted, selfish Temper, and would be far from persuading you to be covetous and fordid; but what I mean is, do not spend causelessly, or to the utmost, if it may be avoided. I would not have you anxious for Futurity; but remember you live in a World full of Changes, and that God has furnished us with Powers of Prospect above the Brute. If you have an Opportunity of increasing your Substance now, this will not continue always; and as there may be an End put to your Gains, so the Expences of a Family may be necessarily increased by unforeseen disastrous Providences. If it should be so, what will be the Consequence? You will find it hard to abridge yourself in Apparel or Diet; and the Practice of those who are your Intimates will urge you on to Expences. Thus you will find your Finances disordered, your Circumstances will not answer the former Calls, and the End will be that you are straitned for adequate Supplies, and the Difficulty will fill your Heads
and

and Hearts with corroding Care. The Devil and a bad Heart will beset you with Temptations, and it is just in God to permit you to be entangled by those Snares which you, in some Degree, prepared for yourselves by a foolish, thoughtless, and presumptuous Conduct. Perhaps by and by you are not able to render to all their Dues; you bring a Blot upon your Reputation, your Family, and upon Religion; and it may be, spend your remaining melancholy Days in the Obscurity and Wretchedness of a loathsome Prison. Perhaps you may think I am carrying the Matter too far; but I assure you I am speaking Facts, the Truth of which Thousands, were they here, might testify with a mournful Emphasis. They have been led Step by Step to those Things, which if they had had hinted to them before, they would have replied to as *Hazael* did to the Prophet, "*Is thy Servant a Dog that he should do this Thing* *?" O the Families that have been ruined for want of *Frugality*!

ELDEST SON.

YOUR Hints are rational, kind, and useful. Young as I am I see the Propriety of your Caution. Indeed I see it in the stronger Light, as we have lately had a most melancholy Instance

* 2 Kings, viii. 13.

of what you have been speaking of in the Shipwreck of a Family which I am told lived formerly in great Affluence, but, thoughtlessly driving upon this Rock, they were dash'd in Pieces. What a Gloom was there upon the Countenance of every Member of it, when Payment was stoppt, and Bankruptcy commenced? Parents and Children were scatter'd! Some commiserated, and some blamed! some survey'd them with a generous Eye of Pity, and others with an Eye of Resentment! and perhaps some of those were as ready as any to blame, who had often partook of their Dainties, and been regaled with the Overflowings of their Cup. Some Hands were tenderly stretch'd out to relieve, others with a Frown refused. One young Gentleman, who a little while ago imagined he was Heir to an Estate, ventur'd upon all the Dangers of the Sea, and the Inclemencies of Foreign Climates, because he could not look his Friends in the Face as in Times past. Another was placed out by the Bounty of Friends, as an Apprentice to a mean Trade. One young Lady, remarkably honourable and modest, submitted to be a Servant in a Family where she had been an admired Guest, and to wait in that very Parlour, and at that very Table, where she was wont to be splendidly entertained. But alas! another Daughter, (shocking to speak of!) beautiful and haughty,

prosti-

prostituted her Virtue, her Charms, and her Honour, to a Gentleman for this low and momentary Gratification, to have the Command of a gilded Equipage and a Train of Servants. With regard to the youngest Branches their silken Finery gradually frittered into Rags ; only some remaining Delicacies in their Countenances and Behaviour discovered that they were born above the common Level. All this while the Breasts of their Parents were rack'd and toss'd with alternate Passions, and felt the sharp Stings of their Folly. If their former Intimates appeared they were ashamed ; if their Children, they were grieved ; if their Creditors, silent Tears preventing a clamorous Demand sometimes were their *only* Answer.

ON the *other Hand*, we all know in a worthy Friend of ours the Power of the contrary Virtue under Providence, and the Blessing which sometimes attends the Frugal. I need not mention his Name. I don't remember indeed (it is impossible I should) the Beginning of his Prosperity, but have heard many wise Persons remark what a Mixture of *saving* and *giving* ran through his Conduct. According to his little Ability he was ready to entertain his Friends, yet more ready to give to the Poor, and to every pious Use, but to himself he allowed little beyond

yond Necessaries. As Providence prosper'd him, he was very cautious how he improved the Provision of his Table, or the Clothes he wore, or the Furniture of his House. Here he was like a Person ascending a steep Hill. But neither the Sounding of his Bowels, nor the Relief of his Hands were restrained from the Poor. Gradually he shone out, but it was like the Sun with the Veil of a modest Cloud over it, and as he received plentifully, so he gave plentifully. Thus his advanced Age is peculiarly honourable; he has every Thing to make Life comfortable; the Glare of Greatness and the Pomp which commonly attends the Increase of Riches he always avoided, and the Saving of this Expence was a Fund for his extensive Charity. Few that are proper Objects go from him empty-handed. He hath met with Losses, but by his frugal Management he was prepared for them, and beforehand with them, so that they did not hurt or disturb him. His Children too are educated upon the same judicious Plan, though their Circumstances are much more easy and affluent.

FATHER.

SON, I thank you, and rejoice in that Wisdom which God hath given you, and that my former Lectures on this Head have entered so deep into your Mind. I trust you will act agreeably here-

to in future Life, as I see with Pleasure the Principles which I have endeavour'd to sow in your Mind, so agreeably shoot forth in your judicious Observations on the Occurrences around you.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

SIR, you are so intent upon this important Advice that you do not regard other Things; and I did not care to break in upon your Theme, otherwise I might have informed you that for a considerable Time the Bees have been pouring into their Hives with an Eagerness that I have not seen before. At other Times I observed that there were always some going and some returning, but now (see!) they rush in by Multitudes, and none venture abroad. What should be the Meaning of this odd Appearance? I am impatient to hear.

FATHER.

A STORM is then approaching. The Author of Nature in the Instinct infused into these little Creatures has, by a Sort of Inspiration, given them Understanding. You see yourselves the Clouds gather and grow thick, and I am satisfied they will discharge themselves soon. Let us therefore adjourn to that *Alcove*, where we also may find a Shelter. It is well it is so near; make haste; it begins to rain already.

ELDEST

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

THIS surprizes me indeed ! I am glad the little Family (or rather the large Family of little ones) is safe. I don't see how they could have supported under such a Weight. Many of these Drops are sufficient, one would think, to strike down a Bee, and almost drown it when fallen. Pray, Sir, unravel this Mystery. They certainly knew of the Shower before we did. But how ?

FATHER.

INSTINCT being an immediate Impression (as far as we know) from the great Former of the Brute Creation, is far beyond our Reach. It seems to act as certainly, invariably, and effectually, as Attraction and Gravity upon insensible and dead Matter. Animals act but know it not ; they act, yet not out of Choice. But there is this Difference, that one Creature is endowed with this sort of Instinct, and another with another ; and that this Difference is adapted to the various Powers with which they are furnished, or the various Stations in which they are placed, or the various Methods by which they are to live, is most apparent ; which shews it the more indisputably to be the Work of God. They have all that Knowledge which is sufficient for the perpetual, uninterrupted Continuance of their Species, and the general Preservation of Individ-

duals. Where their Instinct is designed to operate, it many times exceeds Reason in Man ; but in every other Respect, or take them out of their own Sphere, even those whose Penetration and Sagacity are most remarkable, are very Ideots. To apply it to the Case in hand, they who are feeble and defenceless are taught, upon Danger being near, upon a Storm approaching, to retire to a Place of Safety. Thus you have seen the tender Lambs hasten to the Hedges or Holes on such Occasions ; so Chickens will run to the sheltering Wings of the Mother, and she as readily spreads abroad those Wings to protect them ; yea, the Hen shall see the Hawk soaring aloft in the Air before our Eyes can discover it, and give the alarming Cluck, and the young Brood shall understand the affectionate Intimation, and fly for Refuge. With what Anxiety does the Hen keep her Eye upon their Enemy while he sails round and round over their Heads, and will not dismiss her dear Charge till all is safe !

How soon would the soft Wings of the *Bee* be fatally drench'd if spread abroad in a rainy Season, and so lose their Elasticity ? The immediate Consequence of this would be, she must fall to the Ground to rise no more, but be unavoidably the Prey of Birds or Vermin. But after
their

their Example, I would intreat and charge you to act from a Principle of Reason and Grace the same Part that these Bees do. Learn in every Season of Danger from within and from without to take Shelter in that Object who is suitable and sufficient for your Defence; and this is only by *making the Most High your Habitation*. There are Enemies confederate against you who are daily plotting your Destruction. Now what is to be done but first to secure him who is Omnipotent to be your Friend; and then to act to him as such? Let the Lord be never so excellent in himself, what Defence or Comfort can you find in him if he either is not your own or not applied to? Remember, it will yield you poor Satisfaction to fly to a Stranger. In such a Case the most that the bewilder'd, trembling Soul can say is, *Who knows but he may be gracious!* But for Conscience to tell us he is become our Enemy, and is not reconciled, must be inexpressibly dreadful. To be told that his Wrath is kindled, and that we have made ourselves Stubble, that we have broken the Divine Law, and that this Law denounces and hangs out its Curse, that God is the strong and faithful Guardian of his injured Law, and the Avenger of his violated Covenant; that if his Wrath is kindled but a little, it is sufficient to burn up a World of Sinners; such Reflections as these may cause the Sinner in Dis-

tress not to think of God, or to fly from him ;
 for every Thought of the Most High thus con-
 sidered, must be so far from affording a Balm to
 the Distresses of the Soul, that they must on the
 other Hand exasperate them. It is necessary
 therefore to secure the Favour of this omnipo-
 tent Support, to fly to the Redeemer and his
 Righteousness, his atoning Sacrifice, and preva-
 lent Advocateship, and through him to the Pro-
 mises of the Gospel and to the Covenant of
 Grace, to be in good Earnest in the Surrender
 of ourselves to him, and to walk continually as
 his People. When a poor Sinner does this, he
 may hope that God, even his own God, will
 bless him, that he will never leave him nor for-
 sake him, that he will be with him in Trouble,
 and succour him. And how comfortable is it
 that the Lord is pleased to encourage his People
 to do that which is so much their Privilege? Or
 in the express Words of Scripture, *to make our
 Refuge in the Shadow of his Wings, until the Ca-
 lamities be overpast**. Methinks it is a Metaphor
 taken from the Fowls opening their Wings to
 receive and protect their young Brood. In such
 familiar tender Language does the Lord express
 his Care for the Safety and Encouragement of
 his People in Distress ! Again, he says, *Come my
 People, enter into thy Chambers, and shut thy Doors*

* Psalm lviii. 1.

*about thee, and hide thyself till the Indignation be overpast**. In this hiding Place has many an Heir of Glory found himself safe. Here has he sat and sang for Joy, *Though a Host shall encamp against me, my Heart shall not fear; though War rise against me, in this will I be confident. For in the Time of Trouble he shall hide me in his Pavilion; in the Secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me, he shall set me upon a Rock. And now shall my Head be lifted up above my Enemies round about me; therefore will I offer up Sacrifices of Joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing Praises unto the Lord†.*

I CAN scarce dismiss the Conduct of the Bees without mentioning one Circumstance more, though the Fact I am not *absolutely* certain of, but it is *commonly* said, that the Bees in a windy Season pick up very small Gravel and carry the little Weights in their Feet that they may poise themselves, and thus be prevented from being blown away‡. If this is so, it is another Instance

* Isaiah xxvi. 20.

† Psalm xxvii. 3. 5, 6.

‡ VIRGIL in his fourth Georgic takes notice of this Circumstance,

———et sæpe Lapillos,

Ut Cymbæ instabiles Fluctû jactante Saburram

Tollunt : his sese per inania nubila librant.

Georg. iv. L. 194.

stance of wondrous Instinct, and may serve to give us an Intimation of what we should do in Seasons of peculiar Danger from the Changes in Life. When our Condition is remarkably altered this way or that, how necessary, how desirable is it to have our Hearts fixed? And happy *they* who have such Measures of Divine Grace afforded that their Souls are established, strengthened, and settled amidst the Vicissitudes of Time!

For Instance, are Afflictions laid upon us? Or are they approaching as an armed Man? And are our Hearts ready hereupon to meditate Terror? Do we enquire with Consternation how we shall stand in a Day of Adversity, whence we shall derive Support, how we shall behave as becomes wise Men and Christians, weather the Storm, and keep our Feet steady and our Heads above Water in the Swellings of *Jordan*? Sure it becomes us to take a *proper Method* of getting a *Fixedness* of Temper. Let us see to it that our Souls are hous'd in Christ, in the Covenant of Grace, and interested in its precious Promises

And as when empty Barks on Billows float,
With sandy Ballast Sailors trim the Boat;
So Bees bear Gravel Stones, whose poising Weight
Steers thro' the whistling Winds their steady Flight.

DRYDEN.

through

through Jesus Christ, and with the most solicitous Ardour take pains to clear up our Title to Heaven. When this is done, inferior Directions adapted to the Quality and Degree of our Trial will be proper, and may be more easily followed. Let us often, especially upon particular Occasions, renew our Covenant, let us afresh cast ourselves upon him as God our covenant-God, and confide in his paternal Care. Let us call to mind God's Government of the World, how constantly he attends to and over-rules all Events, and that nothing can befall us without his Permission. Let us recognize that unerring *Wisdom* which effects its infinite Schemes without a Flaw or a Blot, and that *Goodness* to his People whom he calls, though unworthy, the *Apple of his Eye* and his *peculiar Treasure*. Let us believe that as a Father pities his Children, so the Lord pities them that fear him; let us remember also his former loving Kindness to us and others of his People in our respective Difficulties, when he supported, supplied, and delivered beyond all Expectation. Let us read frequently those Promises which like Stars gild the sacred Pages, that through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures we may have Hope, and let us endeavour to reply to the Promises of the Covenant in correspondent Language of Assur-

ance, saying, "*He will never leave me comfortless, but will come to me* *." "*When I pass through the Water he will be with me, and through the Rivers they shall not overflow me; when I pass through the Fire I shall not be burnt, neither shall the Flame kindle upon me* †." Oh! my Children, be often committing yourselves to the divine Mercy and Grace, entreating that according to your Day Strength might be afforded, and that when the Storms rise higher than common, more than common Assistance may be granted. In the mean Time remember that the Lord would not have us give way to Discouragements, "*Fear ye not, says he, their Fear, nor be afraid* ‡." Again, "*Fear not, thou Worm Jacob* §." Let us be assured that to lean upon God so as to be satisfied, to trust in him so as not to be afraid, and to feel his Power, Goodness, and Faithfulness preponderating the Creature's Threatnings and every Affliction that may befall us, is much for the Honour of God and Religion. Upon the whole, while exercising this humble Trust in God, charge your Souls to be steady; if they begin to be discouraged, check them, "*Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him* ||." What is before us we know

* John xiv. 18. † Isaiah xliii. 2. ‡ Ibid. viii. 13. § Ibid. xli. 14. || Psalm xliii. 5.

not,

not, but knowing all the good and gracious Things which I have mentioned, let us not be afraid of evil Tidings, our Hearts being fixed trusting in the Lord*.

MISS MOLLY.

THIS Lecture has been the more seasonable, as it has fallen in with the Workings of my own Mind. I acknowledge my Folly and Guilt that I am very apt to faint in the Day of Adversity. *I have ran with the Footmen, and they have almost wearied me, how then shall I contend with the Horses†?* But I would learn now to trust in the Lord for ever, and hope I shall feel his everlasting Strength communicated to me. But, Sir, may not our Establishment be broken in upon from other Changes in Life besides those of a calamitous Nature?

FATHER.

No doubt! If Providence wears a Smile in its Dispensations, if Comfort flows in plentifully, if Riches encrease, if our Reputation stands high, &c. how apt is this Wind to toss our light Minds? Pride begins to swell, and mounts us up aloft. How ready are we to forget ourselves, our Friends and Companions, our Dependence as Creatures, our Duty to the Supreme Being,

* Psalm cxii. 7.

† Jer. xii. 5.

and our own Mortality? In consequence we sink into a Carnality of Temper, and bound our Views by this World. If the North-Wind of Affliction carries us far one way, the soft and smooth Gales of Prosperity are ready to divert us from our Course into the contrary Passions. And we are the more in Danger, since, when the pleasant Breezes of worldly Wealth and Honour blow, we are apt to stretch our Wings, and to co-operate with such Events, and raise ourselves on the tottering Basis of Self-sufficiency. A certain Self-flattery attends us, and we are insensible of our Danger. Here then, my Children, it ought to be your Prayer, and with fervent Supplications your constant and assiduous Endeavour should be joined to keep yourselves properly poised and ballasted. This must be, under divine Grace, by serious Consideration. As Thoughtlessness is the Distemper, a due Attention of the Mind stands fair for the Cure. Let the Mind then most seriously weigh such Things as these, “ that a Man’s *Felicity* does not consist in, does not depend upon, the Enjoyment of the Body, but upon the Attainment of divine Wisdom and Holiness. That I am not nearer the Favour of God, though all the Men of the World smile and flatter; nor can my Happiness consist in such fluctuating variable Things. That all the Things of this World
“ are

“ are as uncertain as they are contemptible; and
 “ that as my earthly Mountain can never stand
 “ sure, it is the Height of Folly to think that
 “ I shall never be moved; and that a Man’s
 “ Temporalities cannot so much as yield a pre-
 “ sent Delight, if a Cloud come over the Mind,
 “ and Conscience feels the galling Disquietude
 “ of Guilt. Again, let me consider, Am I not
 “ made for *Immortality*? Will not *Death* come
 “ and lay me level with the poorest of my
 “ Neighbours? And if a Man’s Life, even as
 “ to his present Comfort, does not consist in
 “ the Abundance of his Riches, much less is he
 “ a Jot nearer to Heaven, in point of Acquisition
 “ or Preparation for it, by all his Thousands.
 “ Let me consider again, What is it that will
 “ yield me Comfort when bidding adieu to all
 “ the World, which must be the Case soon?
 “ Is it that I have lived a few Years possessed of
 “ large Treasures of Gold and Silver? Poor Sa-
 “ tisfaction, when I shall see them no more for
 “ ever! Surely I must have something better to
 “ build upon, if I would have my Heart esta-
 “ blished, when I am going before my Judge,
 “ and when I am launching out into the Ocean
 “ of Eternity. Oh! be *that* my supreme Pur-
 “ suit now, which when attained will give me
 “ Peace, when all these Things shall fail as
 “ Dreams and Shadows!—How *vain* the Dis-
 “ tinction

“ tinction to die *poor* or *rich* ! in high Reputa-
 “ tion with weak and foolish Mortals, or under
 “ a Cloud of Contempt and Reproach ! But to
 “ be in the Favour of that God, that Redeemer
 “ who is to be my Judge, to be able to call
 “ *him* my Friend, and he allow and acknowledge
 “ the Relation, *whose* Lips will soon, very soon,
 “ pronounce the irreversible Sentence, which
 “ must speedily fix my everlasting State ! to have
 “ a Consciousness within, that I priz’d his Smiles
 “ above all the World, that his Will revealed
 “ in the Gospel was my Rule, that I have fled
 “ for Refuge to the Hope set before me, and
 “ intrusted my immortal All in his well-order’d
 “ Covenant, as that which is all my Salvation !
 “ that I have entered into and cultivated an
 “ Acquaintance with *him* who is the Blessedness
 “ of Heaven, and lived habitually near to him
 “ in a way of Love, Communion, and constant
 “ Obedience ! These, and such Things as these,
 “ are, and they *only* are, a Source of solid Con-
 “ solation in Life and Death.”

MY dear Children, if ever you revere my Ad-
 vice, be in this Case advised by a Father. If
 you think I have one Spark of true Wisdom, I
 would employ it in counselling, in pressing upon
 you this paternal Caution, *Take care of the Smiles*
of the World. It will flatter you, it will be in
 danger

danger of enchanting you. Its Promises are fair and great, but inwardly empty and delusive. It is a *Harlot*, beautiful to the Eye, but false. Read the Scriptures much, and seek Protection from every *Ignis Fatuus* in a full-eyed View of the true Light. converse much with the everlasting State to which you are hastening. Labour by Faith frequently and intimately acted to get your Souls possessed with a deep Sense first of the Reality, and then the infinite Importance of the eternal World. Resolve so to act that you may not charge yourselves with Folly on a calm Reflection. Act so as you shall wish you had acted when you come to die. So conduct yourselves that your Happiness may be secured through immortal Duration, that you may die safely, comfortably, and honourably as Christians, and I ask no more; and if you dwell upon such Things as these, you will have the Poise, the Ballast you need. Then in the Midst of the Smiles of the World you will be honourable, modest, holy, spiritual, and heavenly in your Conversation, and be kept from abusing this World while you are using it. You will honour God in your present and in every Advance of your Circumstances, and you may draw Advantage to yourselves from those Riches in the eternal World, from which thousands and ten thousands feel the most dreadful Sting, even their Abuse of them.

MR.

MR. THOMAS.

AMIDST all the Encomiums, Sir, which you have bestowed on *Bees*, and the many good Qualities you have pointed out in which they are exemplary to us, I think in one Particular they are not to be imitated by us. They carry a Sting about them, which they are very ready upon every Occasion, and without Occasion too, to make use of. I speak with the greater Emphasis upon this Head, as I lately smarted by some of them. I was prying into the Hive, and with a Straw was turning some of them round, when the little mischievous Things came thick around me, and seized me like a Felon. I attempted to beat them off, but they returned with fierce determined Resentment, and darted their little vengeful Javelins into my Flesh.

FATHER.

THEY are not a quarrelsome People. Use them well, or let them alone, and you will find them gentle and peaceable. Unless provoked, they are not injurious. When they swarm and run into Clusters, you may handle them safely, provided you do it tenderly, especially with a clean Hand. Mr. *Thorley**, I remember, tells us of a Swarm that lighted upon the Throat and Bosom of his Maid-servant; and yet, the Woman

* See his History of the Bees, p. 150, &c.

standing

standing quite still, they suffered him to dive into the very Centre of them to find out the Queen, which he did, and thus after a Time he drew them off without injuring her. I wish all our Neighbourhoods, Families, Churches, and Kingdoms were as gentle. I wish all the Princes and States in the World were no more ready to offend: then should we have a quiet World, and they might beat their Swords into Plow-shares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks. Indeed the Bees, if affronted, have strong Resentments: they will fight to the very last. Here they are upon a Level with all other Creatures not endowed with Reason. To sum up the Matter, in general let us be peaceable as Bees; but if injured, let us recollect that we are rational Creatures and Christians, whose Glory it is not to render Evil for Evil, but to overcome Evil with Good, as our God acts to us.

MISS MOLLY.

PRAY, what becomes of the *Bees* at last? How long do they live? If thus powerful and revengeful, how is their *Honey* taken from them?

FATHER.

WRITERS differ in their Sentiments with respect to the Age of a *Bee*. It is the Opinion of some that she may live to six or seven Years;

but

but others think that *Bees* are herein upon a Level with other Insects in general, and do not survive the Year; that the Work of Generation, as in other Societies, is always going on, and consequently that there is a constant Mortality, and that the chief Season of their Multiplication is in the Spring. According to this Doctrine, the *Bees* succeed continually to the Labours and Dwellings of their Predecessors, as we ourselves reside in the Houses which our Ancestors built, and out of which they died.

THE way of procuring their Honey from them is either by a sort of Treachery, or open Violence. The former Method is made use of in what they call *Colonies*, where one Box is contiguous to another, Right and Left, or above and below. In such a Case when the upper Box is full, and the *Bees* are industriously carrying on their Works in the lower, without dreaming of any Mischief, the Passage is intercepted between what I may call the Storehouse and Workshop by the fatal Board, and the Prize carried away by their insidious Masters; and now the poor laborious Creatures must return to work again. Let those who through Oppression, by Cunning or Violence, have been ruined, or suffered great Losses, come hither and see with what Equanimity these Insects bear theirs. They do not quarrel

quarrel with one another, as Mortals too often do upon such Events, but still proceed with their daily Labour, and are as diligent as before. Let this be our Comfort while we pity them that under the Direction of the same Providence they may grow rich again, and that the Revolution of a Year may retrieve all their Losses.

BUT who can refrain condoling while I mention the Method by which the single Hive is robbed? It is by the *Destruction* of the whole Community. The Brimstone Match is provided, and the whole City is suffocated in a few Minutes, and so becomes a Prey to the Proprietor.

IN this Glass see the End of all Things! After our World has been emptying and filling for a Season, when the Ends of Providence are answered, Prophecies and Promises fulfilled, Christ's Kingdom compleated, and his Elect gathered in, lo! the awful Catastrophe takes place! That Earth which now subsists is we know reserved for Fire, and the Fire will consume it. O the important Day! See *the Heavens pass away with a great Noise, the Elements melt with a fervent Heat, the Earth and all that is therein is burning up.* What becomes of it afterwards we leave to the great Manager of all Events, whose sole Property it is. The Saints need it not; they have

a better Habitation provided. They are with their exalted Head and Husband, where all their Wants are supplied, and where the Onsets of Enemies, and the Noise of War are felt and heard no more. They are introduced into that Paradise where they shall ever pluck immortal Fruit from the Tree of Life most suitable for the maintaining, improving, and exhilarating their advanced Natures through immeasurable Duration. And as this is the Case, and our Redeemer proclaims, "Surely I come quickly," let the whole Church eccho their glad "Amen: Even "so come Lord Jesus*."

* Rev. xxii. 20.



The Tenth Dialogue.

FATHER.

THE Morning-Light, by which I now behold you, receives additional Charms to a Parent's Eye whilst it shews him his Children in Health and Chearfulness, as I hope I now see you all. A Father's Blessing salutes you. A Father's Arms embrace you. My Right Hand must forget her Cunning before it can cease stretching itself out in Affection to you, and for you. My Tongue must cleave to the Roof of my Mouth before it can omit its Supplications to Heaven on your Behalf. I could not think myself happy if I saw you unhappy ; for living *you are*, and I trust dying *you will be* upon my Heart.

I SUPPOSE you remember and consent to my Proposal last Night, that, if the Morning was favourable, we would take an early Walk to breathe the fragrant Air, and to view the rural Landscapes ; and if we did not crop the Flowers

at our Feet, yet gather those Productions of Wisdom which would be fairer than the Cowslip, and more odoriferous than the Violet.

ELDEST SON.

As it was our Duty, we have been waiting, Sir, your Leisure, when we might be favour'd with your Company. Your Children, Sir, don't fly into Corners upon the Sound of your Footsteps, as in some Families. Your Looks, your Words, all your Conduct invite us, and we should be both ungrateful to you and unkind to ourselves did we not embrace every Opportunity of Converse with which you are pleas'd to indulge us. I speak for all as well as myself, and indeed have their Commission.

FATHER.

THANKS be to God for our Family Comforts. While this happy Scene continues, let others rule Kingdoms, command Armies, and conquer Countries, I envy them not. While my Children are pious and prudent, dutiful to myself, and affectionate to one another, Blessings to others, and comfortable to themselves, I scarce think any Man more happy in the World than myself.—But let us set forward.—As the Passage is equally near, what if we go through the *Church-Yard*? Perhaps we may gather some Frangency

grancy from the Graves, and hear some interesting Lectures from the silent Mansions of the Dead. How often have we seen the Shoulders of Men bow under the mortal Load, while passing over these very Stones, conveying the Remains of our deceased Neighbours to the Repositories of the Dead? How often has the mournful Widow and her numerous Offspring trod this Path, following the putrid Corpse of a beloved Husband and honoured Parent? Have they not almost mark'd their Footsteps with Tears, while they were going to bury in the same Grave in a manner all their Comforts? At one Time the Aged, like a Shock of Corn fully ripe and long bending, has been borne along this Road; at another Time a Youth, who was like a Flower cropt in its Bloom, once the living Delight of Parents, but now their Grief, has in this Walk been carried to his long Home. You have seen some I may call it abruptly removed by a sudden unceremonious Stroke. A few Days ago they were walking themselves along this dismal Way, conveying others to the Regions of the Dead; but when a few more Suns had revolved, they wanted the Help of others to bear them to the Grave. Others you have seen carried along this Passage to the gloomy Abodes of Death, whose Graves seem'd for many Weeks opening

their Bosoms to receive them, but lingering Illnesses and wearisome Days and Nights suspended their funeral Solemnities.

SEE ! we are come to the awful Inclosure ! — How many Contemplations have been made upon a *Church-Yard* ? But has Death read out all its Lectures ? And does it keep an open School of Wisdom no longer ? How interesting such Sights as these to us Mortals ? Perhaps those very Gates that have not a Minute ago turn'd upon their Hinges to receive us living, may soon expand themselves for the Admission of our dead Corpses. These Bodies may soon add to the Fatness of this Pasture ; and those very *Sheep*, short-liv'd as they may be, may as thoughtlessly feed upon our Graves as they do upon those of others before us. However this or some such Plot must be our Dormitory ; and what Traveller would not choose to look into his Bed-chamber before the very Minute he is to lie down in it ? It is the more affecting to me when I cast my Eyes around here, as I knew more than a few of those who are deposited under these Clods, and saw much of their Stations, Characters, and Behaviour in Life. To *Me* this Spot is singularly instructive, when I compare the former and present State of its Inhabitants.

I NOW

I now stand upon the Grave of one of the *busiest Tradesmen* in this Town. He was endow'd with a large Capacity, and a comprehensive Genius; these he employ'd in laying Plans and Schemes, which must have Time for their Execution. But he was like the Man who employ'd his People in digging Channels to turn a Sea of Water into his Garden, but had no Place to receive it. His Schemes were more proper for an *Antediluvian* than for a Man of this Age. Not to say that the Execution of them would far exceed the Substance of a common Tradesman. Unhappy Man! and with all his Wit and readiness of Thought *very unwise!* A more contracted Scheme for such a mere Span as the Life of Man now is suits better. We don't choose a glove for the Hand, or a Shoe for the Foot by the Largeness, but as it best fits the Part-it is designed for; and he is no better than a Fool, that being of a common Size will have his Coat made so large, as that a *Goliath* may with Ease put it on. But alas! Covetousness, as other Vices, blinds the Eye, and makes a Man forgetful of the plainest Truths; and therefore his great Knowledge issues in great Folly, and his Folly in a Shipwreck of all that he has that is valuable. *There* lies a Person that had not half his Capacity, but much more *Prudence*. He rather chose to build a small House, and finish it, than, like

his Neighbour, gather together vast Materials, all of which lay quite undigested, and unconnected at his Death. The *careful Man* knew his own Incapacity for vast Schemes, habitually bore about with him the Uncertainty of Life, and all human Events, and so kept his Affairs within compass, and left his Family in comfortable Circumstances. But how it will be with the surviving Widow and Children of the *former*, Time only can inform us, and perhaps but slowly. Some of his Plans were but in *embryo*, and at his Death sunk with him before they came to their Birth. Some were found defective which he thought were wise and good. Correspondencies, just entered into abroad, are like new-raised Walls whose Cement is not hardened, and thus a rude Hand easily crushes them. Large Quantities of Goods sent beyond Sea can scarce be traced. Remittances from old Dealers come in but slowly. *It is not safe to pay to any but the Executors, and who they are they seem in no haste to know.* Thick Fogs lie upon his Books of Account, and it is a difficult Thing for a keen Eye to penetrate them. Monies due are rigorously demanded, and the Accounts on which they depend appear with full Evidence. And now what Remarks are made? The Family mourns in secret on many Accounts, while to the World they would not change Countenance! Many that rever'd the Deceased's

Deceased's Counsel like an Oracle, shake their Heads now, and either pity his Family, or blame his Conduct, or tell us, they thought what it would come to; but some, that found their Interests thwarted by his Schemes while living, exult in Triumph. But should I only mention the Shame he himself felt when he lay on his Bed with Death in his View, it would carry in it a *thousand Arguments*. Some of you have heard the painful Reflections he made, and therefore, as well as for the Trouble it gives me upon Recollection, I drop the Subject at present; yet as an affectionate Parent I cannot but *before you* point to him, as at Sea to a *Buoy* or a *Light-house*. You know my Meaning. I have now my Eye upon the Grave of one that was peculiarly *noisy, turbulent, and litigious*; but Death hath silenced him that could be silenced by nothing besides. Poor Man! he was a Thorn in the Side to many, and violated the Repose of those who were willing to live quiet and disturb none. He would never lose the least that he could call his own, and by over-reaching or downright Injustice, I fear, was guilty of Oppression. How often did he think himself affronted where no Affront was designed? he was slow in forgiving, eager in resenting, and was ever carried away by a swelling Tide of the most severe and impetuous Passions! Many fear'd him, but who lov'd him, with any other

other than a Love of Pity, I know not. What Reflections he made upon himself I am not particularly informed ; but, if Fame says true, he looked upon Death with a gloomy, fullen Eye, and yielded to it only as to what he could not conquer. But this I know, that severe Reflections were made upon him when his Breath was stopt ; and many, that were too much intimidated to speak their Minds while he was living, trampled upon the Lion when dead, being assured that he could neither bite nor roar.

AGAINST such a Temper, such a Carriage, I would most strenuously warn you. O mortify that Pride, that inordinate Selfishness, which is the Spring whence such poisonous Waters flow ! Be gentle towards all Men. And here with a *melancholy Pleasure* I can exhibit a Contrast. The *good* Man buried in *yonder* Grave under the Wall of the Church (to which methinks I am borne along by a certain magnetick Influence) was my good Friend living, and I was one of many that pathetically lamented his Decease ; yea, many a Time since the Day that I held up the fatal Pall my Thoughts have hovered around the Spot where he sleeps. In his own Cause he was gentle as a Lamb, and never lost the Smile from his Brow, which seem'd its native Seat, unless the Cause of God and Religion summon'd a Frown thither ;
but

but if the Honour of his Creator or Redeemer were insulted, if Virtue oppressed or Goodness persecuted demanded Resentment, it was ready at their Call, and theirs alone. He was a Patron to whom even the unknown Widow and Orphan fled; he gave them his wise Counsel, lent them his friendly Arm, and often relieved their Necessities. How often was he chosen an Arbitrator by one or other, and sometimes by both the contending Parties? He was a real Friend to human Nature, and thought himself happy if he could prevent ruinous Lawsuits, and yet more so if he could also cement divided Hearts, and pour in the reconciling, healing Balm upon Minds fretted by corroding Passions. Withal he was a truly pious Man; he was a Christian in his Closet, in his Family, in the World, and at the House of God, and recommended Religion by all his uniform Conduct. By this Means he lived and died under the Power of that Peace of God which passeth all Understanding. O what a Gloom hung upon the Countenances of many when his Case appeared dangerous! but what a general Groan was heard when the mournful Tidings pronounced him *dead*! None could be too full of his Praises! How many did I hear lament over themselves, as having lost their best and only Friend! And they that could see thousands of a common Character dead and buried

buried and make no Observation made honourable mention of him. My Children, this Man was *your Father's Friend*; it was my Honour that others thought him, and himself called himself by that Title. Did a great Man esteem so highly of Sir *Philip Sidney* as to have it inscrib'd upon his Grave-stone that he was Sir *Philip Sidney's Friend*? I am sure it will redound to my Reputation to be called *his Friend* as long as he is remembred to be what he was. But I restrain myself, and only add with reference to *him*, Imitate such wherever you see them, and esteem Intimacy with them your Honour and Privilege; they are more valuable than Jewels, and more rare; which puts me in mind of a Proverb among the *Jews*, that *did the World know the Worth of the Godly, rather than part with them it would hedge them about with Pearls.*

ELDEST SON.

THERE is a Tomb yonder that stands super-eminent above the rest, as a royal Tent in a Field among others of inferior Name. I should be glad to draw nearer. Iron Palisadoes full of ornamental Workmanship inclose the awful Tenement! Pilasters, variegated with shewy Marbles, bear up the massy horizontal Stone. See! a pompous Coat of Arms, and a long Detail of Titles and Characters signalize this dignified
Dust!

Dust ! Methinks this Pomp, how common soever, is a sort of Insult upon the Body lying underneath. If Painters throw behind their Pictures a dark Ground that the Colours may appear to better Advantage this Method is the Reverse ; and if the Gloominess of Death in any Form strikes Horror upon the Minds of Mortals, how much more when painted out to more lively View on so shewy a Ground ? But what avails to the Deceas'd this ornamental Cost bestowed upon his Grave ? Call him what you will, it is only calling him what *he was* : his Titles are all lost, with his Estates. When therefore so much Pains are taken to blazon his illustrious Titles, it is in effect to tell the World of what Death has robb'd him ; and perhaps the Heir was at this Cost through a secret Pride that all these very Titles, these Arms, and the Estate that go along with them are now his own and not his Predecessor's ; and joyfully he affords him the nobler a Tomb, as he now possesses the Palace which he built. After all, if the Soul is safely lodged, it not only needs not, but despises such Pomp. If otherwise, what is it to the Soul to be praised in a World where it is not, and to be reproach'd by Conscience and the Devils where it is ? Again, do the Worms pay any Deference to these Things ? Is Putrefaction suspended ? Will they make way for a joyful Resurrection ? Let Decency be observed towards

towards the Remains of the human Nature, but Grandeur seems ill-becoming the Victim of Death, and the Prisoner of the Grave.

MISS FANNY.

PAPPA, I have been reading a Grave-stone for a young Person, which I take the more Notice of, as he was just my Age, which you know is between Fourteen and Fifteen.

FATHER.

No doubt, my Child, we may all of us find Graves of the same Length of our own Clay, and an Age of the same Date, and the Circumstance challenges special Regard ; yea, certainly there is something more teaching to you than to another in such a Grave ; what then have you learned from it ?

MISS FANNY.

I was struck with the Account of the Age, and I cannot say but it made me thoughtful. And though I have not had time to make long Reflections, I thought with myself that I may be removed as young as this Person ; not that I ever doubted it, but the Thought came with more Weight than before. Hereupon I reflected again, *Am I prepared ? Is Jesus Christ my Saviour ?*

viour? Is the Sting of Death taken away? How sad if I should die before I was born again!

FATHER.

I THANK God who has led you to make Reflections suitable to your Case as a dying Creature. May the Fountain of heavenly Wisdom send down more of its Streams into your Heart, for they only can be safe who sleep in Jesus. But I hope, my Dear, this was not the first Time you entred into the Consideration of the State of your Soul.

MISS FANNY.

I KNOW so little, Sir, and have felt so little, that I am ashamed to speak; but as you are always so kind as to encourage me to be free, I must own that I have at Times serious Impressions on my Heart. In *secret Prayer* I have sometimes been enabled to melt for Sin, and to pour out my Heart in Supplication. A Sense of Guilt and Fear of Wrath have often driven me to the Redeemer, who came to seek and save that which is lost, and the *Word preached* in publick hath sometimes come with a *present Power*. But ah! this Morning Cloud, and this early Dew under my Feet, are too much like my Condition. I have lost (I know not how) the sweet and awful Feeling, and soon (and ah! how soon?) hath my
Pulse

Pulse grown as languid as before towards God and heavenly Things. I remember some Time ago, when my youngest Brother was bound Apprentice, I thought, "*And why should not I too enter into a Service?*" One Thought followed another, till I was led to meditate on *the Service of Christ*. I knew he demanded me by his Word; I knew that I was his Right and Property, that he purchased me to be his Servant by his Death, and that he died for me, that I who live by *his* Merits should not live to myself, but to him who died for me and rose again. Again I considered what there was in his Service to encourage me to bind myself to him as my Master, and I found every Thing inviting. I heard him calling upon me, "*Take my Yoke upon you,*" and saying that "*his Yoke was easy;*" I saw him to be the most honourable Master, as he was the Prince of the Kings of the Earth; I found he promised what none else could, even a Crown and Kingdom; and that *where he is there should also his Servant be*. Hereupon I cried to the Lord to overcome all my Unwillingness; and the Issue of a great many Prayers and Reasonings with myself was, that I was desirous to make a Trial in good Earnest. It was the Language of my resolved Heart, "*O Lord, truly I am thy Servant, I am thy Servant.*" And since that Transaction, which I must own hath given
me

me pleasure to reflect upon at Times, I have mingled my Prayers with much Purpose of Heart to cleave unto the Lord. How far I was sincere I have had many Thoughts attended with Hopes and Fears. When I have reflected on what I have done, my Hopes have been a little sanguine; but when I thought what a deceitful Heart I have, I have feared. I should esteem it a Favour if you, Sir, and my Brothers, would give me farther Directions what to do, and attend all with your frequent Supplications for that Grace which is sufficient and suitable to my Wants.

FATHER.

NEVER did your Voice, my Dear, sound so melodious in my Ear. I adore that Grace which permits me to change *Solomon's* Words, and say, "*My Child, since thy Heart is wise, my Heart shall rejoice, even mine. Yea, my Reins do rejoice, since thy Lips speak right Things*.*" And hath the good Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation been at work upon your Soul? Nature and Grace conspire to make me ready to give thee, my Jewel, all that Encouragement and Advice which are suitable to your Case, and I rejoice that I have so agreeable an Errand to carry to the Divine Footstool. And I doubt not but your

* Proverbs xxiii. 15, 16.

VOL. II.

Q

Brothers

Brothers will be easily persuaded to join their Help with me.

ELDEST SON.

SIR, not only your Desire and Hint carries in it the Force of a Command, but the tender Regard we bear to this dear Girl will doubtless engage us to it. We have often carried her when a Child in our Arms, and her loving Kisses and innocent Prattle have formerly, as so many filken Ligaments, bound our Hearts in Tendernefs and Fondnefs to her; but now we shall look upon her with a more serious Eye, and a more deeply engaged Heart.

MR. THOMAS.

WHO would have expected grateful Musick amongst the Tombs? But as I hope Christ has begun to speak in my dear Sister *Fanny*, I am ready to greet her with a holy Kiss as well as the Kiss of a Brother. I hope we shall have many Opportunities of being mutually helpful to each other in the way to Heaven. But for the present, to attend the Lectures of surrounding Death I am ready to express my Admiration to see Men so fond of Inscriptions on Grave-stones, especially when the Sum total of the History upon Record is so short and so little availing. *Such a one died at such a Time, and was*

so

so old. Very edifying to Survivors ! and equally honourable to the Person interr'd ! Whereas the Enquiry soon may be, *Who this Man was ?* and no one can resolve the Question, for the very Remembrance of him is gone. And I may the rather remark the Vanity of this Ambition, as here I see the Stone itself broken, scaling, mouldring with all its Contents. This puts me in mind of some Verses of Dr. *Watts's*, which I am struck with every Time I read or repeat them to myself.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

I SUPPOSE by that, my Brother, you can favour us with them. I am sure the Lines are good if they fell from *his* Pen, and I believe them to be pertinent to the Occasion, if *you* think so.

MR. THOMAS.

I THANK my good Sister for her Compliment to my Understanding. Your *first* Observation, no doubt, every one of us shall fall in with ; as to the *second*, the Verses themselves determine.

THERON among his Travels found
A broken Statue on the Ground ;
And searching onward as he went
He trac'd a ruin'd Monument.
Mould, Moss, and Shades had overgrown
The Sculpture of the crumbling Stone ;

Yet e'er he past with much ado
He guess'd and spell'd out *Sci-pi-o*.

ENOUGH, he cry'd, I'll drudge no more,
In turning the dull Stoicks o'er——
To cure Ambition, I can learn
With greater Ease the great Concern
Of Mortals, how we may despise
All the gay Things below the Skies.

METHINKS a mouldring Pyramid
Says all that the old Sages said !
For me these shatter'd Tombs contain
More Morals than the *Vatican*.——
Now when I feel my Virtue fail
And my ambitious Thoughts prevail,
I'll take a Turn among the Tombs
And see whereto all Glory comes ;
There the vile Foot of every Clown
Tramples the Sons of Honour down.
Beggars with awful Ashes sport
And tread the *Cæsars* in the Dirt.——

THESE Lines are not the Whole of that instructive Poem, but I was not willing to break in too far upon Conversation by my Quotations. On this Occasion, my good Father, I shall be glad if you will please to give us your *extempore Thoughts* upon *Ambition*. They may be of Ser-

vice to us who are entering on the Stage of Life, and prove quickning or cautionary.

FATHER.

AMBITION, in the innocent Sense of it, consists in a Desire to stand well and still improve in the Esteem of others; a Passion which seems to be implanted in the Nature of Man by its great Author for very valuable Purposes. *Ambition* shews itself in a Variety of Shapes, and takes its Tincture, good or bad, from the Heart, where it is bred, and from the Objects that nourish it. In vain Minds it is a mean Passion; in a vicious Person it is a vile one; but when it is the Offspring of Piety, it is glorious and sublime. With some it feeds upon Dust and Chaff, with others upon nothing other than Slaughters and Ravage; and with a few it is a Fellow-Commoner with Angels. A *Nebuchadnezzar* through *Ambition* builds him a *Babylon*, proudly calls it *the House of his Kingdom*, and then leads forth his embattled Hosts to plunder the whole World within his Reach; partly to people it, and partly to fill this great House with Treasure. And what have all the mighty *Nimrods* of the Earth been through their *Ambition* but the Curses of Mankind? The *Ambition* of *Alexander*, of *Cæsar*, of a *Gallic Lewis*, that could be satisfied with nothing but an universal Monarchy,

has made them the Nufances of the Age in which they lived. I can compare them to nothing better than to a Monster rising out of the Ground, breathing Poison so as to taint the Air, and scattering Fire to burn up the Productions of the Earth, and those that dwell upon it. How does the proudly *immortal Man* swell while he reads the pompous Title inscribed upon the *Equestrian* Statue, which every one else knows was drawn up by a mercenary Pen, and dictated perhaps by a Heart that gave the Lie to his Hand; and yet the proud Worm swells more, when he vainly imagines that they who come after him will stop the gilded Chariot or rein the prancing Horse to admire the Man and his pompous Image, and conclude the inscribed Character was drawn from the Life as well as the Features of the Body. What a Monster is *Ambition*, that will not be satisfied but by the Blood of Thousands, without building its Monument upon ruined Kingdoms, and desolated Provinces; and unless Thousands of Widows and Orphans hold up its Train and light up its Torches. Detestable Wretches! while History emblazons their Titles, it is obliged to ring the Knell of their Characters, and tell the Truths which must make them smoke in the Nostrils of every Friend to Human Nature. *Cursed be their Ambition for it is fierce, and their Wrath for it is cruel.* But how
vain

vain to them this Pomp, even if this Monster was not fed with such precious and invaluable Morsels? The lofty Pyramids were built at a prodigious Expence by the Hand of *Ambition*, and yet no one can assure us of the Names of the royal Architects. If the *Egyptian* Monarch built either of them as a funeral Monument, he seems to have been disappointed, as there is an empty Stone Coffin in one of them; and either, it never could be buried there, or the Royal Corpse was ejected by the Resentment of the People. A *Cæsar* wades through *Patrician* Blood, and even thins the Senate of *Rome* to fatten the Plains of *Pharsalia*; but he is very soon stabbed by his Friends to revenge that Ambition. *Pompey* the Great will not bear an Equal, and proudly boasts that if he stamp'd with his Foot he could raise an hundred thousand Men; but see! in a few Years he is cut off by an ignoble Death, and his Carcass is thrown by disregarded!

He

That living cou'd not bear to see
 An Equal, now lies torn and dead!
 Here his pale Trunk and there his Head.
 Great *Pompey*! while I meditate
 With solemn Horror, thy sad Fate,
 Thy Carcass, scatter'd on the Shore
 Without a Name, instructs me more
 Than my whole Library before.

}

BUT it is endless to enlarge upon such Scenes, And yet do not imagine that *Ambition* is confined to Palace-holders, and that it shews itself only in such flagrant Instances. This it is, we have reason to apprehend, that it has prompted some to build Churches, and endow sumptuous Hospitals, that their Names might live in shining Brasses, and be transmitted with Encomiums to future Generations. Some ambitiously call their Lands by their own Names, and then entail them upon their Heir Males for ever. Others that have none of their *own Name* to succeed, adopt and oblige the Adopted to take their Names along with their Estates. If we come lower, we shall find this Weed of Ambition grows in Country Villages too, where such a one will have the Lead among his poorer Neighbours; yea, even the adventurous Cudgel-player is proud of his Superiority over his Antagonist, and hangs up the lac'd Hat as a Trophy of his despicable and brutish Conquest. While in the adjacent Town the little Tradesman is as ambitious to be thought the most wise and eloquent in his contracted Circle at the Coffee-house or Tavern. And if his *Ambition* has nothing else to fasten upon, he hopes at least it shall be told to future Time upon a pompous Grave-stone, that somebody liv'd once that spelt his Name with such Letters, was born

at such a Time, breath'd so long, and died at such a Season.

BUT you are not to think that all *Ambition* is so vain, foolish, and wicked. How honourable those Princes, and how sacred their Memory, who esteem'd it their Glory that they could defend the Weak, relieve the Oppressed, and break the proud Tyrant's merciless Arm? For this Reason ever think and speak respectfully of the late King *William*. From his most early Life, how beneficent were his Schemes! first to rescue his own Country out of the Jaws of a devouring Monster, and afterwards, at the Head of an Alliance, to save all *Europe* from the Chains of *Lewis* the XIVth! Glorious Ambition! when he ventured his Person and all that was valuable in the Behalf of *Britain*, the Protestant Religion, and the civil Liberties established here, when they were brought into imminent Danger through the Tyranny and Bigotry of King *James*! and when afterwards, both at home and abroad, he struggled with Difficulties that would have borne down a Mind not filled with so noble a Principle! Thus he passed through Life; nor could his excellent Disposition, his diffusive Goodness be satisfied without settling the Reversion of the Crown upon a Family who were known Friends to the same Cause. And it is your Happiness,
my

my Children, that you live under the Government of a Sovereign who is a Friend to human Nature, who accounts it his Glory to make his People happy, and enters upon no Wars but to defend the Persons and Properties of his People, and support his Allies against the common Disturbers of *Europe*, and their unrighteous Incroachments upon our *American* Colonies.

I HAVE only to add, Take care to direct *your* Ambition to that which is truly good and is worthy of it. Let no Ambition actuate you short of standing high in the Favour of God, of being accepted in the Beloved, and of having Liberty of Access to the Heart and the Ear of Omnipotence; of having your Prayers heard, of having the Promises of the new Covenant spoken to you, of being Heirs to the immortal Crown of Glory, and of having Angels ministering to you in your Way thither. And if you ever court the Smiles of Fellow-Mortals, let it be in perfect Conformity with, and an entire Subordination to the Smiles of God and Conscience. If Ambition may excite you to virtuous Actions, and be an additional Constraint to a holy Conversation, to have the Approbation of good and wise Men, so far indulge it; but you ought ever to keep awake this necessary Fear, lest the Praise of Men prove a Snare to you. If you attend too much
to

to it, and are not content upon occasion to live without it, I assure you there is the greatest Danger of making Shipwreck of a good Conscience.

ONCE more let me add, that Christianity directs the *Ambition* of the Disciples of Jesus to a very different End to what Nature or Custom, or the Corruptions of the Heart will; and therefore when the Apostle exhorts the *Thessalonians* to be quiet, to do their own *Business**, &c. he uses a Word of this Import (φιλοτιμεισθαι) (Sanctâ videlicet quadam æmulatione, says *Beza*.) Again we find the Word φιλοτιμουμεθα†. We translate the Place, “Wherefore we labour, that whether
“ present or absent we may be accepted of him.” But let me mention to you, my Sons, the Note of that learned Critick *Beza* upon this, “Signi-
“ ficanter Apostolus usurpat hoc Vocabulum,
“ quo civilis quidam honorum et dignitatum *Am-
“ bitus*, propriè significatur, ac si diceret, quod
“ cum ita sit, id est, cum fortiter quidem perga-
“ mus in hac nostrâ ab ipso absentiâ, quam diu
“ videlicet in hoc corpore versamur, et tamen
“ desiderio obtinendæ tandem apud ipsum præ-
“ sentiæ ardeamus, ita sancta quâdam inter nos
“ *Ambitione* vivere annitimur, ut et dum hic
“ præsentes ab illo absumus, et quando tandem
“ hinc discedentes apud illum erimus, illi grati

* 1 Thess. iv. 11.

† 2 Cor. v. 9.

“ et

“ et accepti sumus.” And I ask you most seriously how can *Ambition* pitch upon a nobler Object than to stand high in the Favour of him who is the Fountain of all Honour, who is the supreme Monarch of all, who is the Head over all Things, who is worshipped by Angels, and before whose Face even the Thrones and Principalities bow and prostrate themselves? Especially may it be your *Ambition* to desire to stand up as a Favourite before this King of Kings and Lord of Lords, when he comes clothed with *judicial* Authority, when the Heavens and Earth shall flee away before him, and the assembled Universe shall stand to receive a Sentence from his Mouth that shall fix their everlasting Condition.

BUT I am too long. We must observe Hours yet, though the Dead around us have done with them. I find we have measured our Hour : the Family will expect us for Morning Prayer and Breakfast. If it be agreeable to you, I shall be glad to meet you here To-morrow Morning, as I have something to propose to you. One Thing I'll mention now, as it may previously employ your Thoughts, that I shall ask each of you, what Remarks you made upon viewing a Churchyard?



The Eleventh Dialogue.

FATHER.

THE Time that is past since we stood here I may call the *Parenthesis* of our Conversation, consequently we may now begin where we then ended. To pursue the Discourse therefore, and that every one may have their Share, I would ask each of you what you have learnt from the Survey of a Church-yard? I suppose your Observations will be various, and may be profitable. Shall I ask my youngest first? What practical Remarks does my sweet *Fanny* make?

MISS FANNY.

ONE Thing, Sir, is obvious from the gloomy Scene around us, the Vileness of Sin visible in the Effects which it has produced, especially as it has been working the same way for so many Ages. The Scripture says, that *Death hath passed upon Men, for that all have sinned*; therefore,

fore, young as I am, I can infer that the Death of all these is to be laid at the Door of Sin. But I must leave it to you, Papa, to enlarge on this Subject; I don't know how to do it.

FATHER.

My Child could not have made a more pertinent Observation. Here the Evil of Sin is evident to every opened Eye. O what a Murderer is it? See! it hath slain more than its thousands and ten thousands. What a Foe it is to human Nature! what a mortal Stab has it given to the Generations of Men in every Place and every Age! We blame the Counsels and Swords of Princes, we lament Earthquakes, Storms, and all the various Distempers which at Times, as so many Vultures, prey upon the Bodies of Men; but these are only the Officers of Death, the Harbingers of the King of Terrors, and fulfil his Orders. It is *Death* that snatches the lovely Babe from the fond Arms of its Parents, and as it were dashes it against the Stones. Sometimes this great Conqueror levels his Arrow only at a single Person, and he assuredly drops; but it is Sin that girds him to the Battle, and furnishes his mortal Bow and Quiver. At another Time the cruel Tyrant seems to load his murdering Piece with *Hail shot*, and a Multitude (less or greater) fall at once. If for a
Time

Time he seems to overlook the Aged and Grey-headed, as if they were exempt from his Jurisdiction, we shall find (if we wait a little) they are not forgotten; and where we think him slow in his Progress, yet he is sure. Sometimes he comes with his Torch in his Hand, and sets Fire to the Thread of Life in an Instant; but it is *Sin* that kindles that Torch, and puts it into his Hand. At other Times he wears the Thread away by slow Degrees in lingering Sicknesses; and without any Remorse for the Beauty that he tarnishes, or the Pain that he inflicts, the Monster eats the strongest Twine asunder. No Tyrant so inexorable as Death. He tramples the Embroidery of the Noble, and the Royal Ermine beneath his Feet; and, with more Contempt than the *Pope's* Legate did King *John's*, kicks the Crowns of Princes from their Heads, and hurries their Persons into the thick Shades of Oblivion. He scorns the Hoards of the Covetous, and laughs at the weighty Bribe when poured forth from the unsealed Treasures. The Tears, Prayers, the Agonies either of the dying Person himself or Relations for him, are in Death's Ear but speaking to the Wind, or persuading the Rocks to move away from their Basis. Nay, Sin has made the Monster Death so insatiably rapacious, that, though he has been plundering, tearing, and devouring for so many
Ages,

Ages, yet he is still hungry, still remorseless and unrelenting. *Give, give* is his unceasing, horrible Cry ! and at this very Time, as if he could not do the destroying Work effectually enough by the usual Methods, he is employing *Imperial Butchers* with their ten thousand Swords to offer whole Hecatombs, and dress up a plenteous Shambles of human Flesh for his more than *Canine* Appetite. This Monster it is that drags the *Minister* from his Pulpit, and stops his Mouth, while he would persuade more Sinners to be reconciled unto God. At his sovereign Nod the *Landlord* is served with a Writ of Ejectment, and another takes his Estate. When Death approaches, the *eloquent* Advocate, that pleaded successfully so many Causes, drops his Brief ; for Death is deaf, and will admit of no Pleas. Yea, the honourable *Judge*, who so often with a steady Countenance and a Voice mournful and tender, with a Mixture of Justice and Pity pronounced the fatal Sentence, must himself become a Prisoner, doom'd to the loathsome Dungeons of Death and the Grave. In vain in his Ear shall the *Nobleman* plead the Antiquity of his Pedigree, the Extent of his Estate, the Number of his Servants, and the Lustre of his Equipage, or the *Monarch* the Number and Force of his Armies. They all must follow those who are gone before them. And, which is more awful,

though

though the *Sinner* pleads his unpreparedness for Judgment, that he wants more Time to make his Peace with his offended Master and Judge, and shrinks back with more than imaginable Terror from the Dart of Death, yet it shall be launched without Delay from his vengeful Arm, and drive the reluctant Wretch to his eternal State. We may indeed study Methods to postpone or evade a while the Stroke of Death, and to this End Men have directed their painful Studies and dived into the Secrets of Nature. Some have been digging into the Bowels of putrid Carcasses, and tracing the Vessels up to their Fountains in their various Mæanders, and examining their Contents with their various Secretions, the Use of every Part, and the Advantage of every one to the Whole. Others try Experiments upon living *Animals*, and transfer them to the Use of thy *human Body*; while others are adding to the Stores of the *Apothecary*, in furnishing new Medicines, or changing the Form or adding to the Efficacy of the old ones. These Things in a thousand Shapes, in the *Medicinal* and *Chirurgical* Way, are the Object of Mens Studies, in order to put by the flying Arrows of Death, and for this Purpose the Physician is impatiently waited for, and largely recompenced; the Medicine, though loathsome, is eagerly swallowed, yea, even the favourite Limb is parted with, and

all to avoid Death. And yet Death will come. There is no Discharge in this War. Nay, the Physician himself, with all his boasted Art, dies, and he and all his Patients are gathered to one Place to dwell in the Dust together.

ELDEST SON.

NOTWITHSTANDING your Pause, your Countenance, Sir, seems to tell us that you have something further to offer ; nor have we thought you tedious ; for while you are not weary of speaking, don't imagine we are weary of hearing.

FATHER.

MY Son, you guess'd right ; and had I not thought my Discourse already drawn out too far, I should not have stopt, for my Application of this Point is yet behind. Death is *penal*. It is not an Act of mere Sovereignty that thus consigns us to the Grave, but that of an offended Lord and Judge. “ *Death passed upon all in that all have sinned,*” as my Fanny told us from an inspired Pen *. The general Sentence upon Man for his first Disobedience we have from the Mouth of God, *Dust thou art, and unto Dust thou shalt return* †. Thus Sin, by its rebellious Hand, opened the Gate for Death to enter and seize the whole Race. Its ghastly Face would never have

* Romans v. 12.

† Gen. iii. 19.

been seen, nor its fatal Javelin ever been launched in our World, had not Sin preceded. Horrid Thought! do we regret the Ruin that Death makes? Say rather, "This is the Devastation and Carnage which the first Transgression has made." O what a rueful Scene does the Hand of Sin spread? Suppose we saw all the Inhabitants of a Country, before in flourishing Health, die by *one* Poison, some emaciated, some frantick, some in Tortures of Pain, and knew that one Enemy introduced this Poison, and by casting it into the common Fountain had tainted all the Race, and communicated the Infection to every Individual by what Name should we call this Enemy? What Punishment should we think adequate to his Cruelty? Would not every Heart, Tongue, and Hand be set against him? And, next to the Monster himself, would not he be accounted such who should take him into his House, and treat him as a Friend? Know then that *every Body* here deposited has been murdered, and the Inquest of right Reason, announced and sealed by the unerring Testimony of Revelation, finds SIN to be guilty of the Deed. I say therefore again, every dead Body that we see carried to the Grave, though silently, yet forcibly proclaims the Malignity of Sin. Oh! treat it, my Children, as the Enemy of human Nature. Revenge here is lawful and honourable. Draw the Sword against

it in daily Mortification. Let all your Conduct bespeak your Enmity irreconcilable against Sin. Follow the Blow till the Conquest is compleat, and the rather because, great as this Harm is, it has done us still greater Mischief, and aims to make us entirely and eternally miserable. But it is time to dismiss this subject, though I can never speak enough upon it. What Remark does *my dear Molly* make on this Scene of Ruins?

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

SIR, I have been learning a Lesson in which I would be perfect, and never forget it, namely, *never to be proud of this Body, which must soon be crumbled to Pieces.* I should be glad if you, good Sir, would take up this Subject, and give me and the rest of us a profitable Lecture, as you did upon the Remark which my Sister made.

FATHER.

As your Sister is so young, I did it chearfully, but as I have had pleasing Evidences of my *Molly's* Capacity, I should wrong you if I thought you could not speak pertinently on a Subject so suitable to your Sex and Age. Come then, my Daughter, let me open that Seal which Virgin Modesty hath put upon your Lips. We are all Friends. Were we in a mix'd Company,
possibly

possibly you might have thought the Request not so kind.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

I BELIEVE I should speak Truth, did I say you never gave me a Test of Obedience more difficult. I was wont to be ambitious of gratifying your Desires, but I now wish you would indulge me so far as to recal your Words, which it would give me so much Pain to fulfil. But what Difficulty soever it puts me to I'll break through all, if you insist upon it, even though a Sense of my Inability should give my Mind Confusion and disconcert my Accents.

ELDEST SON.

MY dear Sister, as our Father's Desire gives you a Call to speak, I would have you take Courage. I have found more than once (where Duty called) that what I have undertaken with Self-denial and so with many Fears, I have performed beyond Expectation. Besides, you know not what Occasions you may have to speak in your own Family; and I have often observed, that for want of Use in speaking upon Divine Subjects, those of your own Sex and ours have been shy in discoursing of the Things of God to Friends, Children, and even Servants. Bashfulness therefore in such Things is a Fault, and

will grow if encouraged or not opposed. Speak therefore as to yourself.

ELDEST DAUGHTER.

BROTHER, I thank you. You take every Opportunity of shewing yourself good and kind. I see then in this Church-yard what may ever hide Pride from me, especially that Pride which takes its Rise from an agreeable Form. How far I have been elated when I have had Compliments bestowed upon me, is a Shame to think, and would be Folly to relate. I have had a Share in the Admiration of your Sex, whether real or pretended I don't know. But whatever base Effects have been produced by them, I bid adieu to all Pride on such Account, and think this very Moment, and desire ever to think, that it is one of the greatest Absurdities in the World. What! conceited of that which is at best but enlivened Dust, and warm, animated, breathing Clay! of that which is subject to a thousand desolating Diseases, and will be too soon crush'd to Pieces? What though my Features were delicate, my Shape ever so elegant, and my Form every way charming, yet I know, should I live many Years, that old Age will plow my Face into Furrows, and turn the well-set Hair into Baldness; that it will becloud my Eyes, or cover them with Rheum, and that it will stiffen my
Limbs,

Limbs, and as a heavy Weight upon my Shoulders cause me to bend to the Earth. I know, if Providence so order it, that Eruptions shall disgrace and becrust my Skin, or that a Fever shall dry up my Moisture, or a Dropsy equally disfigure and weaken me by its redundant Floods. If the Almighty speaks the commissioning Word to a Rheumatism, my Hands will forget to labour, or I must be obliged to Crutches to support my feeble Steps. But this Church-yard puts me in mind that it will soon be with my Body worse than all this. When I see a Skull thrown up out of a new-dug Grave, how mortifying the Reflection, that my Head too will be disrobed of all its ornamental Covering, natural and artificial? Perhaps this Face was covered with much more Beauty than mine ever was; perhaps the Eyes which play'd in these *now* frightful Sockets, carried in them more Vivacity, and perhaps the Tongue which moved in that hideous Mouth yielded far more grateful Accents; or may be its Lips had more of the Coral in them, as well as the Cheeks more of the Rose, than what mine can show. But whither is all fled, and what a mean and terrifying Form takes place in their Room? On the whole then I am a fading Flower, which can bear neither Heat nor Frost, which shall be shrivel'd with Age, or cropt by the Hand, or trodden down by any

Foot, or blasted by the Winter ; whose standing is necessarily short, and whose Place soon will not be so much as known. I have often paused, I hope with some Profit, upon some Lines of Mr. *Thomson* on this Head in his Poem on *Winter*.

'Tis done !—Dread Winter spreads her latest
Glooms,

And reigns tremendous o'er the conquer'd Year,
How dead the vegetable Kingdom lies !

How dumb the tuneful ! Horror wide extends
Her desolate Domain. Behold, fond Man !

See here thy pictur'd Life ! pass some few Years,
Thy flow'ring Spring, thy Summer's ardent
Strength,

Thy sober Autumn fading into Age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last,
And shuts the Scene.

I have therefore inscrib'd it on my Dressing-
Glas that I may never forget it, DUST THOU
ART AND UNTO DUST THOU SHALT RETURN.

I have given hereupon a solemn Charge to my
Soul to secure other Ornaments, and another
Sort of Beauties. I would be *comely with a Comeliness which God alone, as the God of all Grace, can put upon me*. I would have *that* Image of his enstamp upon me that shall make me precious and honourable in his Sight, yea, that shall

make me a *Crown of Glory in the Hand of the Lord, and a Royal Diadem in the Hand of our God*. I would be arrayed in that Beauty of Holiness which shall cause Angels themselves to love me; I would be dressed in Features which Death shall not tarnish, and which Church-yards shall not turn into Rottenness. O for those divine Glories to be shed over me which shall attract and fix the Complacency of the Most High, which shall live and grow more resplendent in Sicknes and Age, that so I may by Death be carried to the upper World there to shine thro' endless Ages in the Visions of God and the Lamb!

ELDEST SON.

SIR, I will, with your Leave, take the Liberty to thank my dear Sister *Molly* in the Name of us all. I find I am never disappointed, when I can get her to speak. I judge there is a Treasure within by what occasionally discovers itself. My *Molly*, I would gladly learn of you, while you may chearfully expect from me any Help in those Points which have fallen under my Cognisance.

FATHER.

WHILE I thus attend my Childrens Discourse, it puts me in mind of a Circumstance in the Life of that famous Divine in the Protestant Church
beyond

beyond Sea, *Spanheim*. When he was grown up to be a young Divine, and was finishing his Studies at *Geneva*, being a Youth of uncommon Excellencies, he was the Joy of his reverend and aged Father. From *Geneva* he wrote to his Father, then upon his Death-bed. The Letter was such a Cordial to the good old Man, that when he had read it, he embraced it with both his Hands, watered it with his Tears, and in that very Employment breathed out his Soul unto Christ. (The Words of the Historian were very affecting to me; they were to this Purpose: "Manibus ambabus amplexus literas et lacrymis conspergens, animam Christo expiravit.") I mention this Story to give you some Idea of the inexpressible Joy which arises in the Breast of a Father, when his Children give Testimonies of Wisdom, Love, and Piety. But let me proceed to ask my Son *Thomas* what Improvements he has made upon the Church-yard, and let me desire him to communicate them to us.

MR. THOMAS.

SIR, I have been thinking what a Multitude through every Age is laid into the Dust; for if in this Place there are so many, how many more must there be through the Nation? And yet *Britain* is but a small Spot to the whole Earth! and consequently what a Resurrection will that of the last

last Day be in point of Number, when the Surface of the Sea and Land is seen teeming with one general Life ! And in the mean Time, how vast and unsearchable the Knowledge of that God who surveys every Body in its Materials, and every Particle of its Dust, how many Changes soever it passes through, till the Trumpet of the Archangel shall sound ! I lately received a Letter from a very worthy Friend in relation to some of these Particulars, and if agreeable to you I will read that Part which refers to our Subject.

“ As I was taking a retired Walk behind the
 “ Church in the Twilight of last *Saturday* Even-
 “ ing, the Appearance of the numerous Grave-
 “ stones, which by reason of their whiteness con-
 “ tinued visible, while other Objects were shaded
 “ by the growing Darkness, suggested to my
 “ musing Mind the Substance of the ensuing
 “ Meditation, which at my return home I set
 “ down in the following Order. What a Sight
 “ is here ! a spacious Field thick-set with Mo-
 “ numents of the Dead ! and yet the Monu-
 “ ments are few compared with the Dead that
 “ lie buried here ; yea, most of these Stones
 “ have been set up within my Memory, and per-
 “ haps not one Stone has been erected for twenty
 “ or thirty Persons that have been buried. O
 “ then

“ then what a crowded Theatre will this Spot
 “ be in the great rising Day? What a plen-
 “ tiful Harveſt will it yield? Numerous but not
 “ innumerable! for every one is intimately
 “ known to the Lord, the Judge; every Name
 “ is regiſtered in his Book, nor will one be miſ-
 “ ſing or loſt, not one can eſcape his infinite
 “ Notice or his unerring Search of all the vaſt
 “ Numbers whoſe Bones have been here de-
 “ poſited.

“ SUPPOSE this Iſland not to have been peo-
 “ pled till 500 Years after the univerſal Deluge,
 “ and ſuppoſe one Hundred to have been buried
 “ within the Limits of this Pariſh from that
 “ Period to the general Conflagration, one Year
 “ with another, which may be no extravagant
 “ Computation, if the Earth be ſuppoſed to
 “ have been nearly as well peopled then as now,
 “ ſince in the moſt healthy Seaſons we bury
 “ yearly about one Hundred and Twenty, and
 “ in the late ſickly Time more than a Thou-
 “ ſand here went to their long Home in the
 “ Space of four Years; ſuppoſe then one Hun-
 “ dred to have been buried within this Diſtrict
 “ every Year, by the Space of three Thouſand
 “ five Hundred Years, and it will amount to
 “ three Hundred and fifty Thouſand. A vaſt
 “ Army! But if this Pariſh ſhall, at the Con-
 “ ſuma-

“ summation of all Things, render back three
 “ Hundred and fifty Thousand, what will be
 “ the Product of these three Kingdoms? If the
 “ Number of the People of these Kingdoms be
 “ about twelve Millions *, I cannot reckon this
 “ Parish to contain more than a three thousandth
 “ Part of the Whole. If this be so, then by
 “ the former Computations these three King-
 “ doms may be supposed to yield one thou-
 “ sand and fifty Millions. A prodigious Mul-
 “ titude indeed! But what is that to the Pro-
 “ duce of the whole Earth, the present Inhabi-
 “ tants of which have been judged to be about
 “ three hundred Millions? If this Computation
 “ be allowed, and compared with the foregoing,
 “ the whole Number of the Dead within the
 “ forementioned Space will amount to twenty-
 “ six thousand two hundred and fifty Millions.
 “ Add to these all that I can imagine to have
 “ existed before the Flood, and to have died
 “ within five hundred Years after, which may
 “ possibly amount to one fourth of the preced-
 “ ing Number, and it will increase to thirty-two
 “ thousand eight hundred and twelve Millions
 “ five hundred thousand. Lastly, add all the

* The Author leaves the Computations as he finds
 them in his Friend's Letter, written by that excellent
 Man Mr. *J. Williams* of *Kidderminster*.

Dwellers

“ Dwellers upon Earth that will be found alive
 “ at the Morning of the Resurrection, com-
 “ puting them only as before at three hundred
 “ Millions, the vast Account swells to thirty
 “ three thousand and twelve Millions five hun-
 “ dred thousand; a certain for an uncertain
 “ Number, which probably will not fall short
 “ of, but far exceed this Conjecture.

“ Now stretch thy Powers of Imagination,
 “ O my Soul, to the utmost, and take in (as
 “ far as may be) at one intellectual Survey this
 “ vast, this inconceivable Multitude appearing
 “ before their Sovereign Judge. How capa-
 “ cious that Mind which distinctly knows and
 “ perfectly remembers every Individual of these
 “ his Creatures, and every of their Thoughts,
 “ Words, and Actions? the Time of their
 “ Birth, the Duration of their Existence here,
 “ and the Time, Manner, and Circumstances of
 “ their Death; and can discern, separate, and
 “ collect the scattered Atoms of each, though
 “ crumbled and subdivided into Millions of Par-
 “ ticles, whatsoever Transmutations they might
 “ have passed through. What Work will here
 “ be for Almighty Power to set together, re-
 “ fine, and sublimiate these terrestrial Atoms, to
 “ rebuild and form them spiritual, immortal
 “ Bodies? What Work for all the Host of
 “ Angels

“ Angels to gather together the Elect from the
 “ four Winds? But, as by the divine Appoint-
 “ ment the sleeping Remains of Saints alone
 “ shall hear and awake at the first Blast of the
 “ Archangel’s Trumpet, as the Dead in Christ
 “ shall rise first, this Thought helps to facili-
 “ tate my Conception of the Possibility and Re-
 “ gularity of such Selection, and if the glorious
 “ Angels are *ten thousand Times ten thousand and*
 “ *thousands of thousands*, with what Ease and
 “ Pleasure will they collect and present each his
 “ dear Charge before the glorious Tribunal?
 “ And with what transporting Joy will Myriads
 “ of blessed Spirits, which God will bring with
 “ him, reassume their Bodies, from which they
 “ parted, pale, ghastly, squalid, worn out with
 “ Distempers, or torn by Acts of Violence, or
 “ weltering in devouring Flames, *now* glorious,
 “ enobled, adorned with celestial Beauty and
 “ Splendor, and, like the glorious Angels, excel-
 “ ling in Strength, Swiftnefs, and Agility? not
 “ as heretofore Clogs, Restraints to the Sallies
 “ of their active Inmates, but every way suited
 “ to their heavenly State and Employment, and
 “ adequate to their most seraphick Flights and
 “ Operations. With what exulting Joy may I
 “ imagine each of them surprized at the won-
 “ drous Change !

“ WITH

" WITH what rapturous Delight will they
 " then behold the sovereign Judge, their exalted
 " Redeemer, who loved them to the Death, and
 " whom having not seen they loved in their
 " militant, probational State? With what holy
 " Confidence will they approach him and his
 " friendly Call, and at the same Time with
 " what deep Prostration? Will he upbraid them
 " with their Fickleness and Inconstancy in his
 " Service, with their ungrateful Pusillanimity and
 " want of Zeal? Will not infinite Charity cover
 " their Multitude of Sins? and approve and
 " commend their prevailing Sincerity and Faith-
 " fulness? And O! how will it raise their Joy
 " to hear that all this Happiness, with all its
 " expected Increase and Perpetuity, was pre-
 " pared for them from the Foundation of the
 " World? To what a Degree will their Love
 " be inflamed and their Gratitude enlarged, when
 " they shall discern, possibly in his human, tho'
 " divine, Form, the Prints of the Nails, the
 " Marks of his invincible Love to them?"

EXCUSE me, dear Sir, that I have taken up
 so much of your Hour; but I did not think I
 could say any thing of my own so much to the
 Purpose.

FATHER.

FATHER.

WE thank you for this Extract; and I am glad that you have a literary Correspondence with a Friend so capable of writing to the Purpose. It only remains that you, my Eldest Son, cast in your best Thoughts upon this awful, solemn Subject that lies before us.

ELDEST SON.

WHILE I survey, Sir, this Repository of the Dead, and see the Remains of rational Creatures, Heaps upon Heaps, piled one upon another, I find it to be a Confirmation of my Faith in the *Doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul*; for when I consider Man in his present Abode, and then imagine that at Death there is an End of him, and that he sinks into that State of Non-existence whence he emerged so little a while ago, I am induced to cry out with the Psalmist, *Wherefore hast thou made all Men in vain* *. I think that may be said to be *made in vain*; that apparently does not answer the End of its Being; I mean an End which is not worthy or proportionably valuable. And here I am led to view the *Nature* of Man: he is a rational Being; he hath a *Soul* furnished with intellectual Powers; by these he is capable of discerning Objects which

* Psalm lxxxix. 47.

are beyond the Sphere of Sense, of comparing and distinguishing one Thing with and from another, and of attaining some Knowledge of a first Cause, who is a Being infinitely perfect. This intellectual Power is accompanied with a choosing and refusing Faculty, according to the Appearance that Objects make. The Understanding applies itself to the Will by Representations, and persuades it by Arguments drawn from the real Nature of Things in Opposition to Appearances, from their Suitableness, from their Consequences, and thus leads it to a Determination. Now a Creature, that is thus formed and furnished, must be thought proper to continue longer in Being than Persons commonly do in this Life. Is Man adapted and, may I so say, equipt for great Things, and yet must he sink into Oblivion almost as soon as he makes his Appearance? It is certain that Man is capable of greater Things than he is now engaged in, in point of Employment and Delight; and this Capacity, which is given him by his Creator, may be well supposed to have Objects to center upon, and that, while he follows the Law of his Creation, he will find and enjoy them in a proper Manner, and that making the Will and Glory of God his first Concern, in Subordination to it he aims at his own Felicity. Now can we think that Man is in his right State, his proper Sphere, while he
only

only prosecutes the Things of Sense? I can no more think that God hath set him out thus furnished only to take a more ingenious Care of the Body, that the brutal Part might be fed more delicately and clothed more pompously, and that he might heap together Gold and Silver, which is only a shining Sort of Dust, to leave them to others, than that a wise Nobleman or Judge would send his Son to the University or Inns of Court, and dress him in Scarlet, only to be a more ingenious and polite Scullion-Boy or Scavenger in the Streets. Certainly there is no Proportion between the one and the other; in the latter, all will see the Incongruity at once; and yet I think there is visibly a greater Disproportion between the Faculty of Man's Soul and the Concerns of the present Animal Life, than between the highest and lowest Businessses in common Life. And though they are much more nobly employ'd that are engaged in a studious Life, turning over the Works of others, and making them their own, and adding their own Thoughts to what they collect from abroad, yet, alas! *he that increaseth Knowledge* (and delighteth himself in the Acquisition for a Time) *increaseth Sorrow*. The more he gets the more he is sensible of his own Ignorance; and, though his Pleasure is rational and manly, yet does he not find that the more industrious his Attempts are

to dive into the Nature of Things, the more perplexing Difficulties many Times start up before him, till the Mind is filled with Disquietude; partly suspecting whether what it took for Truth be so or not, and partly from a sort of Despondency of gaining its Purpose; and thus perhaps the Man dies reflecting with the learned *Grotius*, and perhaps the World never saw many more learned, that he had been busy in doing little or nothing.

BUT it will be said, and with a great deal of Reason, that Man was made for Religion, that is, for God; and no doubt but he was: but does he answer the End of his Furniture in this Respect? If not, he is so far made in vain, supposing his Existence to be confined to the present State. If I am a religious Man, I design to glorify God, to represent him as glorious to myself and others; but how little Time have I for both or for either of these? When I begin to know, to esteem, and venerate him with Affection, on this Supposition that my Soul dies with my Body, I presently sink into a State of everlasting Oblivion. When I have spoke of him and for him a few Times, my Mouth must be eternally stopt, and I must no more bear a Testimony for him. In Religion also, I design the *Enjoyment of God*, to partake of his Love, and to rejoice in it;

it; but O how miserably short is the Season for this, if it be confined to the present Life? It is long perhaps before the Man attains the happy Experience; it is at best very imperfect; if he has Comfort at one Time beaming in Darkness Clouds soon veil the Scene; if *Hope* at present sets the Soul upon its Feet, and gives it a View of Glory as its own, *Fear* at other Times introduces a Tremor: so that, upon the whole, the Christian's Life is militant; what he has attained is with much opposition; a great deal remains to be attained, and the whole shews that all is in order to something more. I know God to be perfectly wise; but where is his Wisdom to be seen in Man's Creation if he thus nobly furnishes him, and thus swiftly cancels him? To make him capable of knowing him, and yet to remove him when he had got but a Glympe of him; to make him capable of enjoying him, and design that he should enjoy him but a Trifle of Time, and that so imperfectly; to make him capable of Immortality, and yet plunge him into everlasting Obscurity and Annihilation, where does the Divine Wisdom appear in all this? or how is it that God should give us Tendencies and Longings after Immortality, and yet so soon cut the Thread of our Being short, and blast all for ever?

I APPREHEND we can best form an Idea of Man's native State and Temper by what we see of him in his renewed State, which as far as it proceeds is a Restoration. Now we constantly find that Souls purified by divine Grace, and so rescued in some degree from debasing Corruption, look to the World of Spirits, cannot be satisfied without another Life; they groan, they pant, not altogether because of their bodily Afflictions, but because their Graces are imperfect. They are like Persons shut up in a Prison, which is gloomy and suffocating; and they cannot imagine that this is the only or chief State they were designed for by their heavenly Father. Once more, Would not Faculties less excellent have been good enough to have answered the End, had we been made only to eat and drink, and rise up to Diversions? And why, I would ask, hath the human Soul an Impress of Immortality upon it to torment it with future Prospects, if there is no Existence beyond Death? Methinks farther, as God rules this World by the Means of these Hopes and Fears, it would be a blasphemous Imputation upon him if there is no Foundation for them, as if he governed the World by a Lie; for certainly this Fear of a future Audit helps to keep the Wicked in Awe more, much more than the Sword of the Magistrate and the Penalties of human Laws can possibly effect.

And,

And, on the other Hand, is it to be imagined that God would excite the best Men in the World to the best Actions by the Belief of a Lie? and yet thus it would be, if he would have them believe a State of Immortality when really there is none? Shall I not say that the Righteousness of God requires there should be a future State, since in this World the most Excellent of the Earth are often oppressed even to Death, and the basest of Men go on triumphant to the End of their Days! And let me add, who has shewn more Love to God, more loyal Obedience to his Will, and that steady and constant, than the *Martyrs*, and that too upon the Prospect of Glory after this Life? and can we imagine that the holy and merciful Being, for whose Cause they suffer, would permit them to shed their Blood in vain, and sink themselves, like so many brainsick Fools, into irretrievable Ruin? It cannot be! It would be such a Reproach upon the Divine Nature and Government as I cannot admit! These Things occurred to me while reasoning in a moral Way; and though I take my Articles of Faith from the Gospel, such Things appear to me to be strong Confirmations of them.

ON the whole then, when I look about me here in this Church-yard, and see what will be the Issue of Things in a little Time with reference

rence to all, I please myself with the Thought that it is not a *final* Issue. I must indeed say *to Corruption, Thou art my Father, and to the Worms, Ye are my Mother and my Sisters*; but this Relation only respects my Body; my Soul claims Kindred with the Skies and its Inhabitants. My Soul shall never go down to the Grave. It hath no necessary Affinity in its own Nature with *Matter*, only by a wonderful Hand of God it is ty'd to an animal Body for a short Season. It shall not die with that Body; it shall have a Dismission from it as a Traveller from an Inn, or as a Prisoner from his Confinement. It had indeed a Dress given, in which to act its Part on the Stage of Life; but when that Part is acted, that Dress must be put off, and itself become a disembodied naked Spirit.

BUT I ask Pardon for launching out so far, Yet the Importance of my Subject may apologize for the Length of my Discourse.

FATHER.

SON, I thank you. *A wise Son maketh a glad Father.* This Morning's Discourse will yield a pleasing Reflection. But it is Time to adjourn.

MISS MOLLY.

SIR, I liked my Brother's Discourse; it favors well of his superior Judgment and Gravity. But
I think

I think it is but proper that *you* should dismiss us with some Observation of your own.

FATHER.

IT is more than Time that we had finished. I saw our Discourse was protracting itself beyond our Hour, and therefore I had no Design of offering any Thing farther upon the Scene before us. Only I will mention one Thing, which the Words of our Redeemer have given me occasion to speak of. I have often thought, when walking this Way, how *unaffecting these sounding Bells are to the Dead that lie beneath*, whether they ring separately or together. Thus Sinners continue in Darkness, in Deafness, and Death amidst the Means of Grace, and the reading and preaching of the Word. Does the single Bell toll at one Time in a grave, solemn Manner, or the Clock with its more articulate Sound pronounce the Hour finished; or does the same Bell raise its awful Voice, pronouncing Death passed upon one, and ready to pass upon others, what does it all avail to the Inhabitants in these Tombs? Again, do the Silver Chimes and the Concert of Bells, when all join their most melodious Notes upon festival Occasions, as Royal Birth-days, Marriages, or Victories, spread Cheerfulness around? What is all this to the Bodies devoid of Life shut up in the Mould below? Age after Age there they lie in a State of abso-

lute Insensibility ! A melancholy Emblem of the State of Sinners, till the quickening Voice of *Jesus* pronounces and infuses Life ! I know there is a Difference between a natural and spiritual Death. In the former Case Deafness prevents Guilt ; but where natural Powers are not wanting, and the Obstruction is merely moral, arising from Hardness of Heart, the Enmity of the Will, and the Lusts of the Flesh which war against the Soul, Deafness is criminal ; and yet, alas ! so prevalent, that it will not be removed but by omnipotent Agency. Ministers are to instruct by explaining the great Mysteries of the Gospel, and to exhort by a Variety of Arguments ; they are to reason the Case with Sinners and expostulate ; they are to point out the Consequences of Things, and apply themselves to their Hopes and Fears : but will all this do ? We find in fact that it does not. After the clearest Instructions, how blind do the Generality remain ? how unaffected, tho' the Thunders from Mount *Sinai* are rolled over their Heads, and its Lightnings flash'd in their Faces. Some seem a little to hear, but do not understand ; some are for a Moment alarmed, but, alas ! to no good Purpose. Christ is still shut out, and his Salvation undervalued. Satan, the World, the Flesh and its Lusts occupy the Throne ; and thus it will be till he speaks whose Words carry Power along with them, and who will persuade effectually and obtain the Victory.

Till


Till this is done, Ministers must be obliged to apply those Words, "*We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, but ye have not lamented* *." And indeed why should our great Prophet speak of Sin under this Emblem, even as the Death of the Soul, and of Conversion by the Emblem of the Resurrection, but to convey an Idea to us of an Analogy between them? The Expressions he uses in describing Conversion now, and the Resurrection of the Body at the last Day, are so near the one to the other, that I cannot avoid comparing them. Of the latter, viz. that Resurrection which is at the Consummation of all Things, he says, *The Hour is coming, in which all that are in their Graves shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth* †, &c. And speaking of Conversion now in Gospel-Times, he says, *Verily, I say unto you, the Hour is coming, and now is, when the Dead shall hear the Voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live* ‡.

LET no one then glory in Man. Let Ministers be loved and honoured for their Work and Master's Sake; but who is a *Paul*, or who is an *Apollos* but Instruments? What is the Word, unless it be the Rod of Christ's Strength? Deaf Sinners will not hear so as to distinguish or regard, till the Spirit of God rouze the Soul and raise the Attention. The everlasting Doors will

* Matt. xi. 17. † John v. 28. ‡ Ibid. v. 25.

not fly open of their own Accord, but they must be touched by the Hand of omnipotent Grace. Let Ministers cry aloud and spare not, let them lift up their Voice like a Trumpet, and let People attend with Preparation and Diligence, and hear as for their Lives; but tho' *Paul* or *Apollon* plant and water, it is God that giveth the Increase. Let Ministers and People join to put the Wood in order upon the Altar, and wait for Fire to descend. Or to come nearer to the Emblem of the Resurrection, let the Stone be taken from the Mouth of the Grave, and let us wait for the Lord Jesus to cry, "LAZARUS, COME FORTH;" on which History the pious Mr. *Henry* has this Note: "It is a good Step towards raising of a Soul to
 " a spiritual Life when the Stone is taken away;
 " when Prejudices are removed and got over,
 " and Way made for the Word to the Heart,
 " that it may do its Work there." Again he says, "They took away the Stone; that was
 " all that they could do; Christ only can give
 " Life. What Men can do is only to prepare
 " the Way of the Lord, to fill the Vallies and
 " level Hills, and, as here, to take away the
 " Stone." But after all, let this high Atchievement, the Resurrection from our spiritual Death, be ever ascribed to Christ, for to him it belongs; and if we experience this spiritual Life, be his only and for ever the Glory.

THE END.



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